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AN EXPLANATION

OF THE

PSALMS,

AS READ IN THE LITURGY OF THE CHURCH.

BY THE

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PREFACE.

THIS work was originally intended and undertaken for the benefit of Sunday Schools, but it may be found especially useful in families: for it is probable that the subject and bearing of many of the songs of Zion, as well as many expressions in them, are in general but imperfectly understood: and it is needful that we should "sing with the spirit, and sing with the understanding also." 1 Cor. xiv. 15. If, therefore, on each Sunday, the Psalms for the day be read with this explanation, before going to church, it may be a means, under God's blessing, of exciting a better attention to them, and of enabling some to derive a greater advantage from this important part of our admirable *Liturgy*. To those families, moreover, in which the reading of a portion of Scripture is happily combined with domestic worship, this manual may afford a seasonable help and service.

There are two methods in which the book may be made useful in a Sunday School. 1st, By being placed in the hands of the Teachers alone, enabling them to explain the subjects of the Psalms, and the meaning of the several verses, to such young scholars as are not sufficiently advanced to read and comprehend the notes themselves. 2nd, By its being made a class-book for the higher scholars: in this case it should be lent to them during the week, in order that they may be thoroughly prepared for an examination in the Psalms of the following Sunday. And such as are able, may learn by heart one or more of the practical addresses.

A few questions are added at the end of each Psalm, as a guide to those teachers who require it; but a little attention will show that many more questions may be formed from the words of the Psalms themselves, as well as from the notes and addresses: and an experienced teacher will scarcely want such assistance.

AN

EXPLANATION

OF

THE PSALMS.

THE FIRST DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM I.

In this Psalm are described the character and happiness of the righteous, and the misery and ruin of ungodly men.

1 Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners: and hath not sat in the seat of the scornful.

2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord: and in his law will he exercise himself day and night.

3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the water-side: that will bring forth his fruit in due season.

4 His leaf also shall not wither: and look, whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper.

5 As for the ungodly, it is not so with them: but they are like the chaff, which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth.

6 Therefore the ungodly shall not be able to stand in the judgement: neither the sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

7 But the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: and the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Ver. 1. *that hath not walked, &c.*] Who hath not followed the advice of the ungodly, who hath not formed his course of life according to their wicked principles and

habits.—*nor stood, &c.*] Not fixed and settled himself in their way.—*nor sat, &c.*] As if coolly and purposely sitting down with sinners to scoff at God and religion.

Ver. 2. *exercise himself, &c.*] He thinks and dwells upon the word of God *continually*, on all occasions, by day or by night.

Ver. 3. *the water-side:*] This was a very favourable situation in a hot and dry soil. In Scripture, water is an emblem of the Holy Spirit. *Isa.* xliv. 3. *John* iv. 14.

Ver. 5. *like the chaff,*] Like the thin husks of corn, which are scattered away by the wind at the winnowing. See *Matt.* iii. 12.

Ver. 6. *in the judgement:*] At the day of judgment, when they shall be separated from the righteous, and be driven away to everlasting punishment.

Ver. 7. *the Lord knoweth, &c.*] Approves and blesses it. See 2 *Tim.* ii. 19. In Scripture language, to *know* often signifies to acknowledge or approve. *Psalm* ci. 5. *Matt.* vii. 23. *John* x. 14. 27.

We see in this Psalm the character of the righteous, of all the people of God. They forsake sin; they withdraw themselves entirely from evil company; they never make a mock at any thing serious or sacred. Their minds and hearts are engaged in the study of God's law; it is the joy and comfort of their life. We see the blessed effects of this; they are prospered by their heavenly Father; He "makes every thing work together for their good:" they are like a flourishing tree; they bring forth fruit unto holiness and happiness; they are honoured and accepted by God through Jesus Christ; "having done all, they stand;" the end of the righteous is peace. But how very different from this is the end of the wicked, and of those who forget God; they have made God their enemy, and He will pour His wrath upon them; they will be condemned on the latter day; they will be separated like the chaff, and burnt with unquenchable fire! O that we may seek and serve the Lord our God, with all our heart and soul; that we may "flee from evil, and do the thing that is good;" that we may daily find the comfort of His grace and favour, and hear at last the approving sentence of our Saviour and Judge, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" Matt. xxv. 21.

QUESTIONS.

Who is blessed?—What is meant by walking in the counsel of the ungodly?—What, by sitting in the seat of the scornful?—In what is the good man's delight?—What is meant by exercising ourselves?—What are the righteous like?—What are the ungodly like?—What is chaff?—Where, in the New Testament, are the wicked compared to chaff?—Repeat the passage.—What is meant by the wicked not standing in the judgment?—What, by the Lord *knowing* the way of the righteous?—Repeat the passages on ver. 7.—What should we learn from this Psalm?

PSALM II.

This Psalm declares, according to one sense of the words, that the throne of David, king of Israel, should be established in defiance of all his enemies; and it foretels, in another and higher sense, that the throne and kingdom of Christ should also be established, in due time, in defiance of all his enemies.

1 Why do the heathen so furiously rage together: and why do the people imagine a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together: against the Lord, and against his Anointed.

3 Let us break their bonds asunder: and cast away their cords from us.

4 He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn: the Lord shall have them in derision.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath: and vex them in his sore displeasure.

6 Yet have I set my King: upon my holy hill of Sion.

7 I will preach the law, whereof the Lord hath said unto me: Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

8 Desire of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance: and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.

9 Thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron: and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be learned, ye that are judges of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord in fear: and rejoice unto him with reverence.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and so ye perish from the right way: if his wrath be kindled, (yea, but a little,) blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Ver 1. *the heathen*] Those who were not of Israel;

and who knew not the true God.—*a vain thing?*] A thing which they cannot perform. They raged against David, and thought to destroy him, but could not: so they did afterwards against Christ, but in vain: there is no hope in striving against God: His will must be done, and His word must come to pass.

Ver. 2. *against his Anointed.*] Against David, who was anointed king over Israel. It was a custom to anoint kings and priests with oil. *Exod.* xxviii. 41; xxix. 7. 1 *Sam.* xvi. 13. 2 *Sam.* ii. 7. David was a type, that is, an appointed figure, of the Messiah or Christ; both of these names signify *the anointed. John* i. 41. Accordingly, this second verse of the Psalm foreshows, that kings and rulers should stand up and take counsel against the anointed Son of God; as in truth we find that Herod and Pontius Pilate and many others did. And we learn from *Acts* iv. 25—28, that the beginning of this Psalm was actually intended to foreshow the opposition thus made to Christ.

Ver. 3.] In this verse, the enemies of David and of Christ are represented as saying, Let us not submit, let us not be bound by such an authority; "we will not have this man to reign over us." *Luke* xix. 14.

Ver. 4. *shall laugh, &c.*] God shall disregard them, as men do when they laugh at their enemies: He shall have them "in derision" or contempt.

Ver. 6.] As David was set on his throne in the earthly Jerusalem, on Mount Sion, so should Christ reign there over His spiritual kingdom; and, after that, He should ascend to His throne in the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. *Heb.* xii. 22.

Ver. 7. *I will preach the law, &c.*] I will make known the counsel or decree of the Lord Jehovah, who speaks of Christ, and especially of His resurrection from the dead, in this manner: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee;" on the day when Thou shalt rise from the grave, Thou wilt be, as it were, begotten unto a new life, when thine enemies thought Thee dead for ever; and Thou wilt thus be "declared to be the Son of God with power." *Rom.* i. 4. See also *Acts* xiii. 33, which tells us, that David is here speaking of the resurrection of our Lord.

Accordingly, this is one of the proper Psalms, in our Church Service, for Easter Day.

Ver. 8. *the heathen, &c.*] At David's desire and prayer, his kingdom was enlarged; but this and the two following verses chiefly foretel, that the heathen, or Gentiles, should be brought to the kingdom of Christ, when the Jews rejected Him; that His enemies should be broken to pieces, and "put under His feet."

Ver. 12. *Kiss the Son, &c.*] To kiss the king was, in those days, as it is now, a token of homage and service. 1 *Sam.* x. 1. Submit to the Son of God, your Saviour and King; worship, and love, and serve Him, lest His mercy be turned to judgment; if his anger be kindled against you ever so little, ye will perish; even by Him, who cometh to save you. Blessed are those who believe and obey.

How very plainly does this Psalm show, that David was a prophet, and "spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost;" and how greatly does it confirm the truth of the Gospel! It speaks very clearly of Christ, and the spreading of His kingdom through the world; and the rage of His enemies, and His victory over them all. And we know that these things were fulfilled and are now fulfilling, just as they were declared by David, above one thousand years before Christ came in the flesh: for men still rage against God and His word, and rage in vain. And for what end was all this? "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. ii. 10, 11. O Lord, grant us so perfectly, and without all doubt, to believe in Thy Son Jesus Christ, that our faith in Thy sight may never be reproved: that we may be "obedient by word and deed;" yea, that we may "bring every thought to the obedience of Christ:" and thus, that we "may not perish, but have everlasting life."

QUESTIONS.

What did the heathen do? and kings and rulers, &c.?—What did they say, ver. 3?—What vain thing?—What do you mean by anointed?—Who were the Lord's anointed, in this Psalm?—Who raged against Christ?—Break their bonds?—Cast away their cords?—Who dwelleth in heaven?—Laugh them to scorn?—Derision?—Set my king, &c.?—Will preach

the law, &c.?—Thou art my Son: who?—this day have I begotten thee—what does this refer to?—The heathen for Thine inheritance?—What should kings and people do?—What is it to kiss the Son?—And why?—What do we learn from this Psalm?

PSALM III.

A Psalm of David, composed when he fled from the cruel persecution of his son Absalom, and others who joined in that wicked conspiracy. 2 *Sam.* xv. 10—14.

1 Lord, how are they increased that trouble me: many are they that rise against me.

2 Many one there be that say of my soul: There is no help for him in his God.

3 But thou, O Lord, art my defender: thou art my worship, and the lifter up of my head.

4 I did call upon the Lord with my voice: and he heard me out of his holy hill.

5 I laid me down and slept, and rose up again: for the Lord sustained me.

6 I will not be afraid for ten thousands of the people: that have set themselves against me round about.

7 Up, Lord, and help me, O my God: for thou smitest all mine enemies upon the cheek-bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

8 Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: and thy blessing is upon thy people.

Ver. 2. *that say of my soul:*] That say of *me*, of *my life*,—*There is no help, &c.*] Great afflictions are often regarded by thoughtless and faithless people, as a sure mark of God's displeasure and vengeance; so thought Shimei. 2 *Sam.* xvi. 8. But they are sent in mercy and love to prove His servants; to increase their faith, and make them depend more fully upon His goodness and power. *Heb.* xii. 5—11. The Jews concluded, that the Son of David, the blessed Jesus, when suffering on the cross, was utterly deserted by His heavenly Father: "He trusted in God," &c. *Matt.* xxvii. 43. But Jesus was delivered, as David had been; and as every faithful servant will be, whatever the world may think or say, and however sad or difficult the case may appear.

Ver. 3. *Thou art my worship,*] In our days, the word "worship" signifies only prayer and praise to God; but

formerly it used to signify also honour, or respect from one man to another. Thus *Luke* xiv. 10. Here, "Thou art my worship" means, Thou makest me to be honoured and respected. In the Bible version it is, "Thou art my *glory.*"—*Thou art the lifter up, &c.*] Thou makest me to hold up my head with confidence and joy, and raisest me above my enemies.

Ver. 4. *his holy hill.*] The hill of Sion, where was the tabernacle or house of prayer.

Ver. 5. *sustained me.*] Supported me. In the midst of my troubles and dangers, I laid me down in peace, and slept without fear, trusting to the Lord. This is a very suitable verse for every one to repeat, on his first rising in the morning.

Ver. 7. *the cheek-bone—the teeth*] This is a comparison made from fierce animals; their chief power of doing hurt is from their teeth and cheek-bone, their mouth and jaws: if these were broken, their power would be gone. Hence, to destroy the power of an enemy is sometimes expressed by breaking his teeth, or smiting him on the cheek-bone, &c. *Job* xxix. 17. The Lord had formerly disabled the foes of David, and no doubt He would do so again.

Ver. 8. *salvation, &c.*] Safety, both of body and soul, is from the Lord alone. *Prov.* xxi. 31. *Isaiah* xlv. 21, 22.

Let David's example teach us, under all afflictions and at all times, to put our whole trust in the Lord: if we heartily pray to Him, and faithfully depend upon Him, He will certainly help and deliver us, and He alone can do so. Our foes, like David's, may be "those of our own household." Matt. x. 36. Our friends and relations, instead of walking with us in the ways of God, may vex and oppose us: but we need not be afraid; there is help for us in God. Let us behave ourselves humbly, and refer the matter in prayer to our Almighty Saviour, and He will be our defender. In the most stormy night of trouble, we shall be able to sleep sweetly and securely; and we shall go at last to the grave as to our beds, in hope and comfort; for we shall sleep in Jesus, and awake to glory.

QUESTIONS.

On what occasion was this Psalm composed?—That say of

my *soul?*—What did they say?—Why did they think God would not help him?—Why does God send affliction?—Worship?—The lifter up of my head?—His holy hill?—Who sustained David?—What did David therefore do?—What words should we repeat in the morning?—What do you mean by breaking the teeth, &c.?—What is salvation?—Who gives it?—What does David's example teach us?

PSALM IV.

David, pressed and insulted by his enemies, calls upon God; reproves and warns the wicked; and declares his confidence, joy, and peace, in the Lord.

1 Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast set me at liberty when I was in trouble; have mercy upon me, and hearken unto my prayer.

2 O ye sons of men, how long will ye blaspheme mine honour: and have such pleasure in vanity, and seek after leasing?

3 Know this also, that the Lord hath chosen to himself the man that is godly: when I call upon the Lord, he will hear me.

4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be still.

5 Offer the sacrifice of righteousness: and put your trust in the Lord.

6 There be many that say: Who will shew us any good?

7 Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

8 Thou hast put gladness in my heart: since the time that their corn, and wine, and oil increased.

9 I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest: for it is thou, Lord, only, that makest me dwell in safety.

Ver. 1. *God of my righteousness:*] Thou, whom I serve in righteousness, who makest me righteous, and acceptest me as Thy righteous servant.

Ver. 2. *will ye blaspheme, &c.*] Will ye speak evil of that which is my honour and glory; of my government and the service of my God; also of God Himself.—*in vanity,*] In your vain and foolish strife against me; and *in leasing,* in deceit and lying. As the people blasphemed and uttered lies against David, so did their children afterwards against Christ; but all in vain.

Ver. 3. *the man that is godly: &c.*] The Lord hath chosen me His godly servant, "the man after His own

heart," to be king. 1 *Sam.* xiii. 14; xvi. 6—13. The Lord chooses only such as will be godly, and they whom He chooses shall stand.

Ver. 4. *commune, &c.*] Converse with your heart, consider and examine it in your chamber, when you are quiet and undisturbed.

Ver. 5. *the sacrifice of righteousness:*] No sacrifice or service can be pleasing to God without a righteous heart and character; that is your best sacrifice; be satisfied with nothing else.

Ver. 6. *many that say: &c.*] Our enemies say of *us;* many say so of *themselves,* not knowing where to look for real happiness; even the righteous, under severe trials, may be tempted to complain in this sad manner. David looks to the mercy of God, as to the countenance of a friend, cheering like the light of the sun. See ver. 7.

Ver. 8. *since the time, &c.*] It means *more than in the time* when their earthly blessings increased, as in the Bible version. My *spiritual* gladness is far greater than their *earthly* gladness.

Ver. 9.] This last verse is very proper to be used on going to rest at night.

"In every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Phil. iv. 6. Let the sense of past mercies lead us to pray earnestly and faithfully to our heavenly Father, whatever trouble we may be called to endure: He can set us at liberty, as He has done His servants in all ages. Be it our only care to approve ourselves as His chosen people, in the way of "righteousness and true holiness," and thus through the merits of our Saviour we shall obtain peace at the last. Even, indeed, under the afflictions of life, we shall be far happier than the ungodly, in all their prosperity and all their thoughtless mirth. Take heed, ye foolish and wicked; take comfort, ye wise and righteous. Though there be war without, there will be peace within; and we shall sleep in safety. "Happy the Christian, who having nightly, with the words of this verse, (ver. 9,) committed himself to his bed as to his grave, shall at last, with the same words, resign himself to his grave as to his bed, from which he expects in due time to arise, and sing a morning hymn, with the children of the resurrection."

QUESTIONS.

O God of my righteousness?—How long will ye blaspheme mine honour?—What is leasing?—Whom did the Lord choose?—What is to commune?—The sacrifice of righteousness?—What is the light of God's countenance?—How may the righteous lay themselves down?—Why may they lie down in peace?

PSALM V.

David entreats that his prayer may be heard, and resolves to continue in prayer; trusting in God's mercy to the righteous believer, and declaring His just judgment upon the unrepenting sinner.

1 Ponder my words, O Lord: consider my meditation.

2 O hearken thou unto the voice of my calling, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I make my prayer.

3 My voice shalt thou hear betimes, O Lord: early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

4 For thou art the God that hast no pleasure in wickedness: neither shall any evil dwell with thee.

5 Such as be foolish shall not stand in thy sight: for thou hatest all them that work vanity.

6 Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the Lord will abhor both the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

7 But as for me, I will come into thine house, even upon the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

8 Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness, because of mine enemies: make thy way plain before my face.

9 For there is no faithfulness in his mouth: their inward parts are very wickedness.

10 Their throat is an open sepulchre: they flatter with their tongue.

11 Destroy thou them, O God; let them perish through their own imaginations: cast them out in the multitude of their ungodliness; for they have rebelled against thee.

12 And let all them that put their trust in thee rejoice: they shall ever be giving of thanks, because thou defendest them; they that love thy name shall be joyful in thee.

13 For thou, Lord, wilt give thy blessing unto the righteous: and with thy favourable kindness wilt thou defend him as with a shield.

Ver. 1. *Ponder my words, &c.*] Attend to my *words*

and consider my anxious *thoughts*; the fears and sorrows which break out in fervent prayer.

Ver. 5. *Such as be foolish*] The wicked. To live in sin, is the greatest folly in the world; it destroys our true happiness, by making God our enemy.

Ver. 6. *that speak leasing:*] That speak lies.

Ver. 8. *make thy way plain*] Give me a clear understanding of Thy will, and grace sincerely to obey it.

Ver. 10. *Their throat, &c.*] They open their mouths wide, and there comes forth all manner of filthiness, as if from a *grave;* St. Paul quotes this, to show the wickedness of mankind, both Jews and Gentiles. *Rom.* iii. 13.

Ver. 11. *Destroy thou them, &c.*] From these, and many other like words, it has been said, that David was possessed of a spirit of malice and revenge. This is not true: David desired the good of his enemies, and did all he could to turn and serve them; but when he found they would not hear, he left them for justice and severity. It is as if he had said, "they *must* or they *will* be destroyed." —*their own imaginations:*] Their own thoughts and evil designs.—*in the multitude.*] In their great and manifold wickedness.

Ver. 13. *as with a shield, &c.*] As a shield defends the warrior in battle, so does the unseen power of God defend His people in the midst of all their enemies, earthly and spiritual.

The Lord is always ready to hear the prayers of His servants; more ready to hear than they are to pray. In all their thoughts and works and ways, the Holy Spirit will be their help and guide; and in every sorrow their consolation. "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Though their enemies be ready to swallow them, the Lord will stand by them and save them: they alone are wise, because they alone are safe, who place themselves under His almighty protection. The children of this world may boast of their wisdom, and think the servant of God weak and foolish: but they often find themselves mistaken even in the present life, and, at last, they will see their folly and lament it bitterly. O let us seek the protection of our heavenly Father day by day: early in the morning, before we go forth from our chamber, be it always our first care, to commit ourselves, and all that belong to us, to the keeping

of the Lord of heaven and earth: let our waking thoughts be with Him; and our first words, the words of prayer: so shall we be protected from danger through the day: so shall we "go on our way rejoicing."

QUESTIONS.

What do you mean by pondering?—What by meditation?—When should God hear our voice and our prayer?—Who are the foolish?—What shall they not do?—Whom does God hate?—Whom will He destroy?—Whom abhor?—Make Thy way plain before my face?—What is the throat of the wicked?—How an open sepulchre?—What did David mean by calling upon God to destroy the wicked?—What by their imaginations?—What by the multitude of their ungodliness?—How will God defend the righteous?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM VI.

David wrote this Psalm when he was under some great sickness of body or mind, occasioned by a deep sense of sin, which led him to repent: on this account it is called one of the penitential *Psalms. The others are* 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143. *These Psalms are all used in our Church Service on the first day of Lent, called Ash-Wednesday.*

1 O Lord, rebuke me not in thine indignation: neither chasten me in thy displeasure.

2 Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak: O Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed.

3 My soul also is sore troubled: but, Lord, how long wilt thou punish me?

4 Turn thee, O Lord, and deliver my soul: O save me for thy mercy's sake.

5 For in death no man remembereth thee: and who will give thee thanks in the pit?

6 I am weary of my groaning; every night wash I my bed: and water my couch with my tears.

7 My beauty is gone for very trouble: and worn away because of all mine enemies.

8 Away from me, all ye that work vanity: for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.

9 The Lord hath heard my petition: the Lord will receive my prayer.

10 All mine enemies shall be confounded, and sore vexed: they shall be turned back, and put to shame suddenly.

Ver. 1. *indignation:*] Anger. — *neither chasten, &c.*]

Neither correct and punish me, while Thou art so grievously offended.

Ver. 2. *my bones, &c.*] My sorrow for sin has worn my bodily frame: my very bones ache for want of rest.

Ver. 5. *in the pit;*] In the grave. If I die, I cannot show forth to mankind Thy goodness and power; I cannot sing Thy praise, as I am resolved to do if I live.

Ver. 6. *wash I my bed:*] My tears are so many, that they run down upon my bed.

Ver. 7. *My beauty*] My good looks, the brightness of my eye, and the vigour of my bodily frame. How remarkably does this agree with Isaiah's description of "the Man of sorrows," the blessed Jesus, whom David represented: "many were astonished at thee: his visage was so marred, more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." *Isaiah* lii. 14.

Ver. 8. *the Lord hath heard, &c.*] David's grief is now turned into joy. He had mourned, he had repented, he had resolved to forsake sin, and he now rejoices in the full hope of pardon and peace. Then he proceeds to foretel the shame and confusion of his enemies, ver. 10.

If we grieve sincerely for our sins and transgressions, and look for pardon through Christ, we shall have no cause to be distressed about any thing else; if our sins are pardoned, we are reconciled to God; He is our friend, and we need not fear any enemy. Earthly troubles will arise; pain and sickness will come, the conscience will be burdened, and the flesh is weak: how happy then is it for us, that we have a Physician, who can be touched with a feeling for our infirmities, seeing that He Himself once took them upon Him, and suffered for them, even unto the death of the cross, on which "His bones were vexed!" To this Physician let us go, without delay, while He may be found: hear His words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. xi. 28. Every broken spirit, every contrite heart, come to me for relief: come while ye may; there is no remedy in the grave. "Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up." Hosea vi. 1.

QUESTIONS.

What is indignation?—Chasten?—Displeasure?—What was

the cause of David's sorrow?—What did he do in his sorrow?—With what did he wash his bed and water his couch?—Why was he afterwards joyful?—What became of his enemies?

PSALM VII.

David declares that he is innocent of the crimes charged on him by his enemies, and foretels their destruction. The Psalm may be considered as foreshowing the perfect innocence of Christ, and the ruin of His persecutors.

1 O Lord my God, in thee have I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me;

2 Lest he devour my soul like a lion, and tear it in pieces: while there is none to help.

3 O Lord my God, if I have done any such thing: or if there be any wickedness in my hands;

4 If I have rewarded evil unto him that dealt friendly with me: yea, I have delivered him that without any cause is mine enemy;

5 Then let mine enemy persecute my soul, and take me: yea, let him tread my life down upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust.

6 Stand up, O Lord, in thy wrath, and lift up thyself, because of the indignation of mine enemies: arise up for me in the judgement that thou hast commanded.

7 And so shall the congregation of the people come about thee: for their sakes therefore lift up thyself again.

8 The Lord shall judge the people; give sentence with me, O Lord: according to my righteousness, and according to the innocency that is in me.

9 O let the wickedness of the ungodly come to an end: but guide thou the just.

10 For the righteous God: trieth the very hearts and reins.

11 My help cometh of God: who preserveth them that are true of heart.

12 God is a righteous Judge, strong and patient: and God is provoked every day.

13 If a man will not turn, he will whet his sword: he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

14 He hath prepared for him the instruments of death: he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.

15 Behold, he travaileth with mischief: he hath conceived sorrow, and brought forth ungodliness.

16 He hath graven and digged up a pit: and is fallen himself into the destruction that he made for other.

17 For his travail shall come upon his own head: and his wickedness shall fall on his own pate.

18 I will give thanks unto the Lord, according to his righteousness: and I will praise the name of the Lord most high.

Ver. 1. *persecute*] To follow any one with intent to kill or hurt.

Ver. 2. *Lest he devour*] Lest my enemy devour; probably it means Saul, who persecuted David. 1 *Sam.* xxii. 9—19; xxiii. 26—28.

Ver. 3. *any wickedness*] Any such wickedness as I am accused of; Jesus Christ alone, the true David, was altogether free from sin. 1 *Pet.* ii. 22.

Ver. 4. *yea, I have delivered*] David was so far from having done evil to Saul, when at peace with him, that he twice saved the life of this his great enemy, who hated him without a cause. 1 *Sam.* xxiv. xxvi.

Ver. 5. *lay mine honour, &c.*] Let him destroy my character, let him bury my good name, along with my body, in the grave.

Ver. 6. *lift up thyself,*] Go up, and sit upon Thy high seat of justice: spoken after the custom of men.—*the judgement, &c.*] God hath often commanded His servants to execute judgment upon His enemies: David therefore, since they would not turn, now calls upon God to cut them off from troubling His Church; just as Christ denounced judgment upon the Jewish people.

Ver. 8. *according to my righteousness, &c.*] According as Thou knowest me to have been righteous in my conduct towards my enemies, and innocent of the evil laid to my charge.

Ver. 10. *the very hearts and reins*] The most secret desires and thoughts. The reins are, properly, the kidneys.

Ver. 12. *God is provoked, &c.*] And yet, though provoked, in mercy delays His judgment, to see if men will repent. Though strong and able to punish, yet He is patient and forbearing. How ought this great "goodness of God to lead us to repentance!" *Rom.* ii. 4.

Ver. 13. *He will whet, &c.*] God will be making ready the instruments of destruction, as a warrior before the battle whets his sword, and bends his bow, and sets his arrows (*ver.* 14) against an enemy. The wrath of the Lord may be slow, but it is always sure, if men will not turn and serve Him.

Ver. 15. *he travaileth with mischief:*] He, that is, the ungodly man, has his heart big with mischief: he has been

conceiving and plotting misery for me; but it shall fall upon himself: all his schemes are brought forth, or executed in ungodliness; and so must end in ruin.

Ver. 16. *He hath graven*] He hath cut in the ground a place for a pit, and digged it out. They used to dig pits to catch wild beasts in: so it means, "he has been secretly planning to catch and to kill me." Saul and others did so against David: the Jews did so continually against Christ. —*fallen himself, &c.*] It is frequently seen in the world, that the wicked fall into their own snares; and we have several examples of this in Scripture. Saul was overthrown by those Philistines whom he would have made the instruments of cutting off David. 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 1—6. Haman was hanged on his own gallows. *Esther* vii. 19. The cruel people who cast Daniel into the den of lions, perished there themselves. *Dan.* vi. 24. And the Jews, who led the Romans to crucify Christ, were themselves, by the Romans, crucified in vast numbers; as we learn from *Josephus*, book v. chap. 11. So truly does Solomon say of the wicked, "Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices." *Prov.* i. 31.

Ver. 17. *his travail*] That with which he was so big, his mischief.—*pate.*] Head.

We learn from this Psalm, that the wickedness of the ungodly shall come to an end: that God lets them alone and bears with them for a time: but if they go on in their wickedness, He prepares for them the punishments they deserve, and often makes them the instruments of their own ruin. Let us fear and serve the Lord betimes; let us avoid every thing which may expose us to His displeasure; and trust in Him for deliverance from every danger and every enemy. Thus we shall be able "to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." *Eph.* vi. 13. To stand even on the latter day, when men and angels shall lift up their voices and cry out together, "Righteous art thou, O Lord, and true is thy judgement." *Psalm* cxix. 137.

QUESTIONS.

What is it to persecute?—Who sought to devour David?—What was he like?—What is the meaning of "lay mine honour in the dust?"—How was God to lift up Himself?—In what sense was David righteous and without wickedness?—What do you mean by the hearts and reins?—How is God described as a

Judge?—God will whet His sword?—Hath bent His bow?—Ordaineth His arrows?—What is meant by the ungodly digging a pit?—Give some example of the wicked falling by their own devices and snares.—What do you mean by his own pate?

PSALM VIII.

The glory of God is displayed in the works of Creation and in His great love to man; also the wonderful condescension of the Lord Jesus as Messiah, and His last great triumph when He ascended into the heavens: On this account, our Church has appointed this Psalm to be read on the Ascension Day.

1 O Lord our Governour, how excellent is thy name in all the world: thou that hast set thy glory above the heavens!

2 Out of the mouth of very babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies: that thou mightest still the enemy, and the avenger.

3 For I will consider thy heavens, even the works of thy fingers: the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained.

4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him: and the Son of man, that thou visitest him?

5 Thou madest him lower than the angels: to crown him with glory and worship.

6 Thou makest him to have dominion of the works of thy hands: and thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet;

7 All sheep and oxen: yea, and the beasts of the field;

8 The fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea: and whatsoever walketh through the paths of the seas.

9 O Lord our Governour: how excellent is thy Name in all the world!

Ver. 2. *ordained strength,*] Thou hast so settled it, that the meanest and weakest of Thy creatures shall show forth Thy glory. Thou makest them strong, and so declarest Thy power by them. Thus David slew the giant. 1 *Sam.* xvii. 45—49. Thus the little children in the temple cried, "Hosannah to the Son of David," in the midst of His wicked enemies, thereby exactly fulfilling these words of the Psalm. *Matt.* xxi. 16. And thus, as the Gospel spread, the weak prevailed against the strong, the few against the many, the sheep against the wolves. *Matt.* x. 16. *Luke* xii. 32. 1 *Cor.* i. 25—29.

Ver. 3. *the moon and the stars,*] It is thought that David composed this Psalm at night, when the moon and the

stars were shining brightly above him. These were called by a figure, the work of God's fingers, i. e. they were made by Him.

Ver. 4. *What is man,*] In the midst of all this glory in the heavens, wonderful is it, that *man*, fallen man, should be minded and regarded by the great Creator; visited with the tokens of His love, even with the good tidings of salvation!

Ver. 5. *Thou madest him lower*] Man is but little lower than the angels, and yet may attain to a crown of glory and honour. The verse however chiefly alludes to Christ, the "Son of God," and "Son of Man," who, in taking upon Him our flesh, was made lower than the angels, but was afterwards "exalted with great triumph unto His kingdom in heaven." The Apostle applies the passage in this manner, showing clearly that Jesus was the subject of David's song. *Heb.* ii. 5—9.

Ver. 6. *to have dominion*] To have rule. This verse, (as also *ver.* 7, 8,) describing the dominion of Adam over the creation, was intended to foreshow the sovereign power and dominion of Christ over all the world. *Heb.* ii. 8. What the first Adam lost by transgression, the second Adam (Jesus Christ) regained by His perfect obedience. Accordingly we hear Him saying, after His resurrection, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." *Matt.* xxviii. 18. See also *Phil.* ii. 5—11.

Ver. 8.] The Psalm ends, as it began, with repeating the praise of Jehovah for the glorious works of creation and redemption.

"Who can express the noble acts of the Lord, or show forth all His praise?" How grand and astonishing is the view of the heavens! How is the mind filled, how lost in wonder, as we behold the moon travelling in her brightness through the dark blue sky, in the midst of ten thousand times ten thousand stars! What an idea does it give us of the power and glory of the Creator! and yet but a poor idea. Far higher He is than the highest heavens; yea, they are as nothing in comparison. "Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in His sight. How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man, which is a worm?" *Job* xxv. 5, 6. Yet the Lord hath respect unto us, and "loadeth us with His benefits," un-

worthy as we are. Yea, the eternal Son of God has humbled Himself for our sakes; to recover us from our fallen condition, and to show us better things to come. He has died and won the crown, that we may die and win it also. Weak we are, but we go forth in His strength and not our own: unworthy we are; but "worthy is the Lamb!" Blessed Jesus! "how excellent is Thy name in all the world!" Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And let all the people say, *Amen.*

QUESTIONS.

Out of what did God ordain strength?—What is meant by this verse?—How and when was it applied by our Lord?—When did the weak prevail over the strong?—Whom did God make lower than the angels?—And why?—Over what has man dominion?—Who gave it him?—What other dominion is here alluded to?—How does the Psalm begin and end?

THE SECOND DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM IX.

David praises God for the destruction of enemies, and prays for future deliverances; and the language he uses, both of praise and prayer, is suited to the Church in all ages.

1 I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, with my whole heart: I will speak of all thy marvellous works.

2 I will be glad and rejoice in thee: yea, my songs will I make of thy Name, O thou most Highest.

3 While mine enemies are driven back: they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

4 For thou hast maintained my right and my cause: thou art set in the throne that judgest right.

5 Thou hast rebuked the heathen, and destroyed the ungodly: thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.

6 O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end: even as the cities which thou hast destroyed; their memorial is perished with them.

7 But the Lord shall endure for ever: he hath also prepared his seat for judgement.

8 For he shall judge the world in righteousness: and minister

true judgement unto the people.

9 The Lord also will be a defence for the oppressed: even a refuge in due time of trouble.

10 And they that know thy Name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast never failed them that seek thee.

11 O praise the Lord which dwelleth in Sion: show the people of his doings.

12 For when he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: and forgetteth not the complaint of the poor.

13 Have mercy upon me, O Lord; consider the trouble which I suffer of them that hate me: thou that liftest me up from the gates of death.

14 That I may show all thy praises within the ports of the daughter of Sion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

15 The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the same net which they hid privily is their foot taken.

16 The Lord is known to execute judgement: the ungodly is trapped in the work of his own hands.

17 The wicked shall be turned into hell: and all the people that forget God.

18 For the poor shall not alway be forgotten: the patient abiding of the meek shall not perish for ever.

19 Up, Lord, and let not man have the upper hand: let the heathen be judged in thy sight.

20 Put them in fear, O Lord: that the heathen may know themselves to be but men.

Ver. 1. *marvellous*] Very wonderful.

Ver. 6. *to a perpetual end, &c.*] To a lasting end, to an end for ever. Thy work of destruction, O enemy, is at an end; thou art now like the cities which thou didst formerly destroy! their remembrance is lost with them; and thou also shalt be remembered no more. Such was the case with most of the nations which fought against David and Israel; such has already been the case with many people that have fought against Christ and His people; and in due time His enemies will all utterly perish, and be heard of no more.—*their memorial*] *Psalm* cix. 14.

Ver. 8. *minister*] Shall give, shall deal out righteous judgment.

Ver. 10. *thy name*] Thy mercy, wisdom, and power. *Prov.* xviii. 10.

Ver. 11. *dwelleth in Sion:*] God showed forth His glory and revealed His will on the mercy-seat, above the ark, which was in the tabernacle on Mount Sion; and therefore He was said to dwell there. *Exod.* xxv. 21, 22.

Ver. 12. *inquisition, &c.*] When He maketh inquiry, when

He taketh account of the blood of His servants, which has been shed, and which has cried up to heaven against the murderers, as the blood of Abel did. *Gen.* iv. 10. *Isaiah* xxvi. 21. Thus also of the blood of Christ; it has been upon the shedders of it, according to their own blind prayer. *Matt.* xxvii. 25.—*remembereth,*] God remembereth His people, and them that trust in Him (*ver.* 10), when He punisheth his enemies.

Ver. 13. *from the gates of death.*] From the entrance to the grave and the unseen world.

Ver. 14. *within the ports*] Within the gates of Jerusalem. The daughter of a city or place means the people, the inhabitants; the city being, as it were, their parent.

Ver. 15, 16.] See on *Psalm* vii. 15, 16.

Ver. 17. *into hell:*] The word hell, in this as in many other passages, probably means the grave, or the state of the dead. It is true that all the wicked, who repent not, will "go away into everlasting punishment." *Matt.* xxv. 46. But here David seems to foretel that all the people, or nations, that forget God, and serve Him not, shall be destroyed. There might be some good people amongst them, and they would be singled out and saved.

Ver. 18. *not alway*] That is, shall never be forgotten —shall never perish.

Ver. 20. *to be but men.*] To be but weak and helpless men, who cannot stand against Thee, the Almighty God; and therefore had better submit to Thy teaching and law.

All our mercies should be acknowledged before God in heart-felt praises; the whole glory of every deliverance and blessing belongs to Him; we should take delight in showing forth His marvellous works done to ourselves and to all his people; and no words can be more suitable than the beginning of this Psalm. And seeing what God has hitherto done for us and His Church, at all times, we must entirely depend upon Him for evermore. His enemies may stand their ground for a season, but they will not triumph at last; they never did, and never will. The eternal God has already prepared His throne for judgment, and "every man shall be rewarded according to his deeds." The unbeliever and ungodly shall be brought to shame, and perish; the believer and the righteous shall lift up their heads with joy, and be saved. "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." *Isa.* xxvi. 4.

QUESTIONS.

What is marvellous?—What do you mean by destructions coming to a perpetual end?—What is a memorial?—How shall God judge the world?—They that know Thy name?—Which dwelleth in Sion?—What is it to make inquisition?—When will God make inquisition?—The gates of death?—The ports of the daughter of Sion?—Shall not perish for ever?—To be but men?

PSALM X.

The former part of this Psalm describes the character of some wicked and cruel enemy, or enemies, who persecuted David and the Church in his day; and, no doubt, was intended to describe the enemies of Christ and His Church. The Psalmist then proceeds to commit the cause to the Lord, in prayer and praise.

1 Why standest thou so far off, O Lord: and hidest thy face in the needful time of trouble?

2 The ungodly for his own lust doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the crafty wiliness that they have imagined.

3 For the ungodly hath made boast of his own heart's desire: and speaketh good of the covetous, whom God abhorreth.

4 The ungodly is so proud, that he careth not for God: neither is God in all his thoughts.

5 His ways are always grievous: thy judgements are far above out of his sight, and therefore defieth he all his enemies.

6 For he hath said in his heart, Tush, I shall never be cast down: there shall no harm happen unto me.

7 His mouth is full of cursing, deceit, and fraud: under his tongue is ungodliness and vanity.

8 He sitteth lurking in the thievish corners of the streets: and privily in his lurking dens doth he murder the innocent; his eyes are set against the poor.

9 For he lieth waiting secretly; even as a lion lurketh he in his den: that he may ravish the poor.

10 He doth ravish the poor: when he getteth him into his net.

11 He falleth down, and humbleth himself: that the congregation of the poor may fall into the hands of his captains.

12 He hath said in his heart, Tush, God hath forgotten: He hideth away his face, and he will never see it.

13 Arise, O Lord God, and lift up thine hand: forget not the poor.

14 Wherefore should the

wicked blaspheme God: while he doth say in his heart, Tush, thou, God, carest not for it.

15 Surely thou hast seen it: for thou beholdest ungodliness and wrong.

16 That thou mayest take the matter into thine hand: the poor committeth himself unto thee; for thou art the helper of the friendless.

17 Break thou the power of the ungodly and malicious: take away his ungodliness, and thou shalt find none.

18 The Lord is King for ever and ever: and the heathen are perished out of the land.

19 Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the poor: thou preparest their heart, and thine ear hearkeneth thereto,

20 To help the fatherless and poor unto their right: that the man of the earth be no more exalted against them.

Ver 1. *Why standest thou so far off,*] As if thou wouldest neither see, nor help: as if Thou didst hide Thy face, that Thou mightest not behold the suffering of Thy people.

Ver. 2. *For his own lust*] In his wicked passion, to gratify his proud and cruel desires.—*the poor*:] The weak and helpless man.—*in the crafty wiliness*] In the cunning devices.

Ver. 3.] This verse contains two marks of a very wicked man: he not only *desires* evil, but *makes a boast* of it, "glorying in his shame," *Phil.* iii. 19; not only does what is wrong, but delights in and praises ungodly people, whom the Lord *abhorreth* or hateth. *Rom.* i. 32.

Ver. 5. *always grievous*:] Always offensive and hurtful. —*therefore defieth he*] Since he fears no judgment, he fears no enemy, and behaves himself in a proud and insulting manner.

Ver. 6. *Tush,*] a word of contempt.

Ver. 7. *under his tongue*] Concealed and ready to be shot forth, like the poison of a serpent.

Ver. 8. *in the thievish corners*] In the dark secret corners, where thieves lie hid.—*privily*] Privately, secretly.

Ver. 9. *that he may ravish*] That he may catch and destroy the innocent.

Ver. 11. *humbleth himself*:] Pretends to be humble and to flatter them, that he may ensnare them the more easily. How continually did the proud Scribes and Pharisees act thus towards our Lord! *Luke* xx. 19—23.

Ver. 12. *God hath forgotten:*] Because God doth not punish immediately, they conclude that He does not observe, and will never punish at all. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore," &c. *Eccl.* viii. 13.

Ver. 13.] If such be the deceitfulness of the wicked, what resource have we against them but in prayer?

Ver. 17. *and thou shalt find none.*] "Till," or, "until thou find none."—*Bible version.* Take his ungodliness away, more and more, till there be none remaining.

Ver. 18. *The heathen are perished*] As the inhabitants of Canaan had been destroyed before the face of Israel; so should all the enemies of the Lord and of His Church perish for evermore.

Ver. 19. *Thou preparest their heart;*] These words are very striking: God gives His people the grace to pray, and then listens to their prayer. He inclines their heart to Him, and then blesses their godly desires: so true are the words of the Apostle, "It is God that worketh in you," &c. *Phil.* ii. 13. So true is the language of our Church at evening prayer, "O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed," &c.

The Church, situated as it is in an evil world, must suffer affliction for a season; and every member thereof must expect his share. The wicked hate the godly, because they hate God; and Satan, their master, puts it into their hearts to oppose, and revile, and injure, every faithful servant of the Lord. Thus said Jesus to His disciples: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." *John.* xv. 19. This is our trial; but God, if we heartily pray to Him and depend upon Him, will support us under it, and carry us safely through. He may sometimes, for the sake of proving our faith, "hide His face from us," may withdraw the comfort of His Holy Spirit, and appear as if He had left us alone in the world: even the blessed Jesus was left to cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" *Matt.* xxvii. 46. But the Lord does never forget those who trust in Him; the cloud will pass away, and His grace will shine more brightly upon them. He sets bounds to every enemy, and every trial. He says to the wicked, "Hitherto shall ye go, and no farther;" and when they have run the course permitted

them, they perish: *their* joy, and the sorrows of the righteous, are alike but for a moment: *their* misery, and the happiness of the righteous, are alike eternal.

QUESTIONS.

What do you mean by God's standing afar off, and hiding His face?—Who are meant by the poor?—Crafty wiliness?—What is meant by *tush?*—What is under the tongue of the wicked?—What does it mean?—Thievish corners?—Privily?—Ravish?—Why did the ungodly one fall down and humble himself?—What heathen nations had perished out of the land?—What does God do to enable the righteous to pray?—What do we learn from this psalm?

PSALM XI.

David being advised to leave his throne and fly, on account of the malice of his enemies, expresses his trust in the Almighty God, who destroys the wicked, and exalts the righteous.

1 In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye then to my soul, That she should flee as a bird unto the hill?

2 For lo, the ungodly bend their bow, and make ready their arrows within the quiver: that they may privily shoot at them which are true of heart.

3 For the foundations will be cast down: and what hath the righteous done?

4 The Lord is in his holy temple: the Lord's seat is in heaven.

5 His eyes consider the poor: and his eye-lids try the children of men.

6 The Lord alloweth the righteous: but the ungodly, and him that delighteth in wickedness, doth his soul abhor.

7 Upon the ungodly he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, storm and tempest: this shall be their portion to drink.

8 For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness: his countenance will behold the thing that is just.

Ver. 1. *how say ye then, &c.*] Why then do ye speak to me as if my *life* were in danger? Why do ye advise me to fly to some mountain for safety, as a poor timid bird?

Ver. 2, 3. *For lo, &c.*] These two verses show the reason *why* David's friends recommended him to fly: "Behold," say they, "the ungodly are bending their bow,

they are preparing to shoot at you as at a bird; righteousness and justice (which are the very *foundations* of safety and good government) are nearly destroyed;" and *what hath the righteous done*, or what can he do, to secure himself in such times as these?—*the quiver:*] A box or case to hold arrows.

Ver. 4. *The Lord, &c.*] This is the answer of David to his mistaken friends: Why should I fly? The Lord is still in His holy temple, and will hear my prayer; the throne of God is still in heaven: He is still the Governor and Judge of the world, still the Protector of Israel and every true servant, whatever man may threaten or do.

Ver. 5. *his eye-lids try*] He sees, or knows, the most secret designs of men, and reserves them all for just judgment.

Ver. 6. *alloweth*] Approves and accepts.

Ver. 7. *shall rain snares,*] Shall send snares, temptations, and troubles thick upon them like a heavy rain; they shall have many trials.—*fire and brimstone, &c.*] The language of this verse is taken from the awful judgments on Sodom and Gomorrah. *Gen.* xix. 24, 25. So shall all the wicked be punished: and this is an emblem of the future destruction of the wicked. *Jude* ver. 7. *Rev.* xx. 10.—*this shall be their portion to drink.*] This shall be their lot. Each of the guests at a table had frequently his portion of liquor set before him in a cup: from this custom, the dealings of God with men, whether of joy or sorrow, are often called the *portion of their cup*, or their portion to *drink*. See *Luke* xxii. 42.

Ver. 8. *loveth righteousness:*] God loves that which is like Himself: His *countenance will behold*, that is, He will look with favour upon the thing that is just.

The Christian, in times of trouble and danger, should do as David did, put his whole trust in the Lord; and not be ready to desert his place and his duty, at the wish of weak or timorous friends. Go where he will, he will not be beyond the reach of trouble; temptations are every where, and so is the grace of God. The wicked, however proud or mighty, cannot move God from His throne. He is present with every one of us; with the good and the evil; to give their due recompense to

both; loving the one, and hating the other; exalting the one, and humbling the other. Often, in this life, we can see the working of His power, in mercy and in judgment: the earthly deliverances and blessings which He sends to His people are a foretaste of their everlasting deliverance from sin and death, and their happiness in heaven: the plagues, which He sends upon the ungodly here, are but the sad and feeble foreshowings of that dreadful place, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." *Mark* ix. 44. 46. 48. Righteous Lord, give us grace to serve Thee here in righteousness, that Thou mayest be our portion for ever!

QUESTIONS.

In whom did David trust?—What did his friends say to him?—What did they say to his soul?—Why did they give such advice?—Did David follow it?—What did he say?—What did he mean by the Lord's being in His temple?—And His seat?—By His eye-lids trying the children of men?—What will He do to the wicked?—What does this description allude to?—Of what is it the sign?—Their portion to drink?—What should we then do?

Ebening Prayer.

PSALM XII.

David laments the decay of godly men, speaks of the false and foul tongues of his wicked enemies, and comforts himself with the pure word of God, who will surely keep his promises.

1 Help me, Lord, for there is not one godly man left: for the faithful are minished from among the children of men.

2 They talk of vanity every one with his neighbour: they do but flatter with their lips, and dissemble in their double heart.

3 The Lord shall root out all deceitful lips: and the tongue that speaketh proud things;

4 Which have said, With our tongue will we prevail: we are they that ought to speak, who is lord over us?

5 Now for the comfortless troubles' sake of the needy: and because of the deep sighing of the poor;

6 I will up, saith the Lord: and will help every one from him that swelleth against him, and will set him at rest.

7 The words of the Lord are pure words: even as the silver, which from the earth is tried,

and purified seven times in the fire.

8 Thou shalt keep them, O Lord : thou shalt preserve him from this generation for ever.

9 The ungodly walk on every side : when they are exalted, the children of men are put to rebuke.

Ver. 1. *are minished*] Are lessened in number, are taken away. All the people about Saul and his court were become corrupt ; there was nobody to be trusted.

Ver. 2. *dissemble*] Speak falsely, saying what they do not think, and concealing what they do think ; which shows their *double heart* and double dealing.

Ver. 3. *shall root out*] Or, shall cut off. The Lord shall put a stop to those who speak deceitfully, and punish them, as if by the cutting off of their lips and tongue.

Ver. 4. *With our tongue, &c.*] We will do great things, and gain our purpose by violent language.—*Who is lord over us?*] Who shall order and stop us ?

Ver. 5, 6. *Now for the comfortless troubles' sake of the needy :*] This is the answer to David's cry for help. For the sake of those troubles of the needy which deprive them of comfort ; for the consolation of the afflicted.—*I will up,*] I will arise.

Ver. 7. *are pure words :*] Then David reflects that the words of the Lord are true and faithful, without any mixture of error.—*Even as the silver which from the earth is tried,*] The pureness and goodness of silver, when put into a vessel of earth or clay, is tried by fire and *purified seven times*] that is, many times, from the dross which rises to the top when it is melted ; and so the metal becomes purer, and is more esteemed. Thus the word of God, found to be true under many and hard trials, is like the finest ore.

Ver. 9. *are put to rebuke.*] Are scorned and trampled upon. The righteous are oppressed, and the wicked are encouraged.

The Lord is all-sufficient, even in the worst of times. Though we had not a godly neighbour left, though we could find no faith in the earth, though we were alone in the world, yet should we not be alone : the Lord would be with us, and hear our prayer for mercy and protection. Though there were ten thou-

sand tongues to slander and ruin us, God can silence them all, or make them conduce even to our benefit. And amid all the violent and false words of men, how great is the comfort of depending upon the pure and sure word of God, in which we find promise of support under every trouble, and of a complete deliverance at the last! However the wicked may prevail, their triumph is but short; as Jesus said to the enemies who came to take Him, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." *Luke* xxii. 53. But that hour will quickly pass with us, as it did with Him; and the power of darkness will be overthrown; "The Lord will be our everlasting light, and the days of our mourning shall be ended." *Isaiah* lx. 20.

QUESTIONS.

Why does David call upon the Lord to help him?—What is *minished?*—Dissemble?—With our tongue will we prevail?—What is comfortless trouble?—And what the comfortless troubles' sake of the needy?—I will up, saith the Lord?—Even as the silver, &c., to what custom does this allude?—Are put to rebuke?

PSALM XIII.

David complains, as if forgotten and forsaken; prays for help; trusts and rejoices in God.

1 How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever: how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?

2 How long shall I seek counsel in my soul, and be so vexed in my heart; how long shall mine enemies triumph over me?

3 Consider and hear me, O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes, that I sleep not in death.

4 Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him: for if I be cast down, they that trouble me will rejoice at it.

5 But my trust is in thy mercy: and my heart is joyful in thy salvation.

6 I will sing of the Lord, because he hath dealt so lovingly with me: yea, I will praise the name of the Lord most highest.

Ver. 1.] We should read the verse thus, "*How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? For ever?*" Shall it indeed be for ever?—God is said to *forget*, or to *hide His face*, when He does not show Himself present by His mercy and power.

Ver. 2. *shall I seek counsel*] Shall I be driven, in my distress, to seek the means of deliverance? How long shall I be so perplexed in my very soul?

Ver. 3. *lighten mine eyes*] Show me a way to escape, lest I die: give me wisdom, that I may walk safely. Or, it may allude to the dulness and heaviness of the eye, in time of sickness and grief; "make my eye bright;" revive me by removing my burden.—*sleep not in death.*] Death is often described as a sleep; *Job* xiv. 12. *John* xi. 11. *Acts* vii. 60.

Ver. 5, 6.] We may observe, that this and many other psalms which begin in a strain of sorrow and mourning, end in joy and praise. It shows how readily the grace of God is granted to the prayers of His faithful people; how speedily He can deliver, and change the note of sadness into songs of rejoicing and triumph.

The best of men are sometimes left to great uneasiness and discouragement, either for the correction of their sins, or the trial of their faith. They may even begin to fear, that the Lord intends to cast them off for ever. At such moments, let them pray; prayer is their best, their only sure remedy: "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray." *James* v. 13. This is the way by which God has appointed to bestow His comfort and blessing; and we can have them in no other way than His own. "Pray without ceasing," and you will certainly be delivered; and either sing of the Lord upon earth for His great loving-kindness, or, which is far better, sing His praises, with saints and angels, in the chorus of the redeemed above.

QUESTIONS.

What is the subject of this Psalm?—How do you read the first verse?—What do you mean by God's forgetting and hiding His face?—How long shall I seek counsel?—Lighten mine eyes?—To what is death compared?—Why did David sing of the Lord?—What do we learn from his example?

PSALM XIV.

Here we see the bad character of those unbelieving people who were enemies to David; and of unbelieving people in general. In the Lord alone can any trust be placed for deliverance and blessing.

1 The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God.

2 They are corrupt, and become abominable in their

doings: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

3 The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men: to see if there were any that would understand, and seek after God.

4 But they are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become abominable: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

5 Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues have they deceived: the poison of asps is under their lips.

6 Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood.

7 Destruction and unhappiness is in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes.

8 Have they no knowledge, that they are all such workers of mischief: eating up my people as it were bread, and call not upon the Lord?

9 There were they brought in great fear, even where no fear was: for God is in the generation of the righteous.

10 As for you, ye have made a mock at the counsel of the poor: because he putteth his trust in the Lord.

11 Who shall give salvation unto Israel out of Sion? When the Lord turneth the captivity of his people: then shall Jacob rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

Ver. 1. *The fool*] To deny God is the greatest of all *folly and madness.* The wicked are often called fools; and such indeed they are, having no understanding of what is wisest and best; their "foolish heart is darkened." *Rom.* i. 21.—*hath said in his heart:*] Has vainly imagined that there is no God who will call him to account. He has thought it and wished it within himself, though he dare not say and declare it openly by words.

Ver. 2. *they are corrupt,*] Probably meaning those wicked people, who joined Absalom against him. But the words may be applied to the world at large (*Rom.* iii. 10, &c.) to show the great corruption of mankind.—*abominable,*] Hateful to good men and to God.

Ver. 5. *Their throat, &c.*] See on *Psalm* v. 10.—*asps*] A kind of serpent. Their words are full of mischief and death, like the *poison* of an asp.

Ver. 8. *no knowledge,*] They know nothing as they ought to know; they are all so blinded with sin and folly; they devour my people as men eat bread; so thoroughly are they set upon wrong and cruelty.

Ver. 9. *There were they brought*] By such means were *my people* (*ver.* 8) brought into great fear, where there was

no cause for it. God was their helper and defender; why need they "fear what man could do unto them?"

Ver. 10. *As for you,*] The wicked: ye have derided the counsel, the advice of me your poor persecuted king; because I trust in the unseen power of God. So did the wicked Jews make a mock of Christ, the Son of David, "He trusted in God," &c. *Matt.* xxvii. 43.

Ver. 11. *When the Lord turneth the captivity*] When He bringeth back His people from the place where they are held prisoners: or, where they have been driven to, and are obliged to remain, as in bondage.—*Jacob and Israel*] All the people of God. Let us raise our thoughts from such temporal deliverance to the salvation which is come out of Sion, by Jesus Christ, who delivers all true believers from the far more miserable bondage of sin and death.

All the wickedness of men's words and actions springs from the corrupt fountain of their hearts. Even the denial of a God proceeds from this evil source: men love evil, think evil, do evil; and thus they are led to believe that what they wish is true, that *there is no God,* who will call them to judgment. But many live in unbelief, who do not, dare not, confess it. The punishment will be the same: whether the life declare, or the tongue declare, it is all one; for the Lord searcheth the heart, and will judge accordingly: no enemy of His, however secret, shall escape. But let us pray to be delivered from the misery of all sin and all unbelief; let us pray, that "with the heart we may believe unto righteousness," *Rom.* x. 10, and never be numbered with those most foolish of all people, who are living without God in the world, and losing their own souls. O Lord, set us free, by the power of Thy grace, from all such vile abominations; and when at last Thou comest, with Thy holy angels, to set Thy people free for ever from their wicked enemy, may we, on that day of redemption, with Jacob rejoice, and with Israel be glad!

QUESTIONS.

Who hath said in his heart?—What has he said?—What character is given of the wicked in this Psalm?—What is their throat?—How an open sepulchre?—Poison of asps?—How is it they have no knowledge?—At what did they make a mock?—What is turning the captivity of a people?—Which is the worst of all captivity?—Who will deliver us from it?—And when shall we be fully delivered?

THE THIRD DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM XV.

It has been thought that this Psalm was composed when David, after having been driven from Mount Sion by Absalom's rebellion, was brought back again. 2 Sam. xv. 17. *A description is given in it of the character of that person whom God would admit to serve Him continually, and dwell with Him in His courts upon earth, as an emblem and foretaste of his eternal service and dwelling in heaven. This going up and returning of David to God's presence on this hill of Sion, is therefore taken as a prophetical sign of our blessed Lord's ascending and returning to the heavens, when His earthly warfare was finished. Hence the Psalm is appointed to be read on* Ascension-Day.

1 Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle: or who shall rest upon thy holy hill?

2 Even he that leadeth an uncorrupt life: and doeth the thing which is right, and speaketh the truth from his heart.

3 He that hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour: and hath not slandered his neighbour.

4 He that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes: and maketh much of them that fear the Lord.

5 He that sweareth unto his neighbour, and disappointeth him not: though it were to his own hindrance.

6 He that hath not given his money upon usury: nor taken reward against the innocent.

7 Whoso doeth these things: shall never fall.

Ver. 1. *Who shall dwell—who shall rest*] David inquires what are the marks and qualities of God's accepted servants; of those who so worship Him on earth, as to have a well-grounded hope of abiding with Him for ever on the everlasting hill of the heavenly Jerusalem. The Psalmist makes no inquiry here about faith, as the ground of the sinner's acceptance with God; this was another question: he asks what must be the sign and the fruit by which a believer shows himself to be "made *meet* to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light?" *Col.* i. 12.

Ver. 2. *uncorrupt*] Pure and holy. David gives the answer as from God, declaring that a man's hope of heavenly favour must be shown by a holy and virtuous life. It was not enough for them to say that they were born of Abraham; they must "do the *works* of Abraham." *John* viii. 39. It is not enough for us to "name the name of Christ;" we must "depart from iniquity." 2 *Tim.* ii. 19. *Matt.* vii. 21. Duty to God and duty to man must be faithfully performed. David here chiefly points out the latter of these duties: in fact, duty to man is a part of our duty to God, for God has commanded it.

Ver. 4. *that setteth not by himself,*] That doth not *think much* of himself; not "more highly than he ought to think." *Rom.* xii. 3.

Ver. 6. *his money upon usury:*] Usury was the interest paid for money lent: and the rich were forbidden to take any usury from a needy *brother*. *Exod.* xxii. 25—27. *Deut.* xxiii. 19, 20.—*nor taken reward against the innocent.*] Who never takes a bribe to speak or act against an innocent man.

Ver. 7. *Whoso doeth these things:*] Such things as these; showing kindness and doing what is right to all men, especially regarding those who fear the Lord, (*ver.* 4,) and proving by this means that all was done "for the Lord's sake," from faith in Him and love to Him. In short, the answer of God in this Psalm agrees very much with what we find in the 6th chapter of Micah: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" See *ver.* 6—8.—*shall never fall.*] Shall hold on his way towards heaven, unmoved by temptation, and arrive there in safety.

We are plainly told in this Psalm, who they are whom God will honour and accept; and carefully should we examine our hearts and lives, to see if we are of the happy number. We may go to His temple and worship, with unholy hearts and unrighteous lives; but God will not own us; He will cast us out at last, like the man in the parable of the marriage feast, "who had not on a wedding garment." The worship of ungodly, unjust, or unmerciful men, is a mockery of God: "The sacri-

fice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is His delight." *Prov.* xv. 8. None upon earth can be accepted at the mercy-seat, none can be admitted into the presence-chamber in heaven, but such as love God; "And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also." 1 *John* iv. 21. Jesus, our Lord and Priest and King, is gone up into the heavens; and if we would follow Him thither, we must walk on earth as He walked: He "hath left us an example, that we should follow His steps;" 1 *Pet.* ii. 21. And he that doeth so, shall not be moved, to eternity.

QUESTIONS.

On what occasion was this Psalm written?—Where was the holy hill?—What did David mean by dwelling and resting there?—Of what was David's *going up* a pattern or type?—What inquiry is made in this Psalm?—What is the character of those whom God accepts?—Uncorrupt?—Setteth not by himself?—Of whom does the true believer make much?—Upon usury?—Taken reward against the innocent?—Whoso doeth these things?—What of him?—How never fall?

PSALM XVI.

The former part expresses entire trust in God; the latter, verses 8—11, *contains a remarkable prophecy of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; indeed it would almost appear that Christ,* the true David, *is speaking through the whole of the Psalm.*

1 Preserve me, O God: for in thee have I put my tru st.

2 O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord: Thou art my God, my goods are nothing unto thee.

3 All my delight is upon the saints that are in the earth: and upon such as excel in virtue.

4 But they that run after another God: shall have great trouble.

5 Their drink offerings of blood will I not offer: neither make mention of their names within my lips.

6 The Lord himself is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: thou shalt maintain my lot.

7 The lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground: yea, I have a goodly heritage.

8 I will thank the Lord for giving me warning: my reins also chasten me in the night-season.

9 I have set God always before me : for he is on my right hand, therefore I shall not fall.

10 Wherefore my heart was glad, and my glory rejoiced : my flesh also shall rest in hope.

11 For why? thou shalt not leave my soul in hell : neither shalt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.

12 Thou shalt show me the path of life ; in thy presence is the fulness of joy : and at thy right hand there is pleasure for evermore.

Ver. 2. *my goods are nothing unto thee.*] All the good things I possess, and all the good actions I can do, are of no profit to Thee; they add nothing to the greatness of Thy perfections, to Thy happiness or glory: but Thou, out of Thine own great goodness, "art my God," my protector and defender.

Ver. 3. *my delight, &c.*] Such is the feeling of all good men.

Ver. 5. *Their drink-offerings of blood*] The heathens used to pour out, sometimes to taste or drink, the blood of the animals offered for sacrifice; often, indeed, the blood of men, who were slain for this purpose : and this was called a drink-offering to their false gods. David says he will have nothing to do with such vile abominations, and will not even *mention the names* of their gods. He is supposed, when this Psalm was written, to have lived among the heathen Philistines, and, in order to keep clear of their idolatry, to resolve not even to mention their sin.

Ver. 6. *The portion of mine inheritance,*] I look to the Lord as my possession and my treasure: He will give me a kingdom here, as an emblem and pledge of an eternal kingdom of glory.—*of my cup :*] See on *Psalm* xi. 7.

Ver. 7. *The lot is fallen unto me*] In allusion to Canaan being apportioned *by lot* to the different tribes of Israel. *Numb.* xxvi. 55, 56. It means, My portion, or kingdom, is in a pleasant country ; my lot is a happy one.—*a goodly heritage.*] A goodly inheritance or possession.

Ver. 8. *warning :*] Counsel, instruction ; by which I have been guided safely.—*my reins*] My inward thoughts, assisted and inspired by God, correct and purify me, as I lie awake on my bed. *Psalm* vii. 10.

Ver. 9. *I have set God always before me :*] I have walked always as in His sight, and have done whatever I have done to please Him.

Ver. 10. *my glory*] My tongue, which is the glory of man above all other creatures upon earth, especially when employed in setting forth the glory of God. *Psalm* lvii. 8. *Acts* ii. 26.—*shall rest*] Namely, when I die.

Ver. 11. *in hell:*] In the state of the dead; in the place to which departed spirits go.—*to see corruption.*] Namely, to perish in the grave. St. Peter expressly says, *Acts* ii. 31, that David was here speaking of the *resurrection of Christ*, that His soul was not left in hell, neither "His flesh did see corruption." And St. Paul seems to go further, and to declare that David, in this verse, did not mean to speak of *himself* at all, but *only* of Christ; for this Apostle says, *Acts* xiii. 36, 37, that *David* fell asleep (i. e. died), and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption; but He (Christ), whom God raised again, saw no corruption: that is, this 11th verse of the Psalm is *not* true of David, but is true of Christ. Read the whole explanation, *Acts* ii. 22—32; xiii. 34—37. *Observe also*, that THE HOLY ONE in Scripture always means Jehovah. *Job* vi. 10. *Isaiah* xliii. 15. *Heb.* i. 12, &c.; and this title is given to Jesus Christ. *Mark* i. 24. *Acts* iii. 14.

Ver. 12.] This verse also belongs chiefly to Christ, *Acts* ii. 28, describing His return from the grave, by Jehovah "showing Him *the path of life:*" then He returned to heaven, to His "*fulness of joy*," "*by the right hand* of God exalted." *Acts* ii. 33.

In this, as in many other Psalms, we learn how to overcome temptations, and how we may be preserved through trials; namely, by trusting in God, and pouring out our prayers before Him. We must also remember, that all good comes from God, to whom the whole glory belongs; do what we may, after all, "we are unprofitable servants;" we can neither make God our debtor, nor add any thing to His greatness. That man, who makes the Lord his portion, is rich, whatever he may want upon earth: and if the Lord has counselled and led us to make this happy choice, and to set Him alway before us, then indeed we may be content; for He will not suffer any faithful servant, however tried, to fall by the hands of the enemy. We may live in peace, and die in hope, to rise in glory: "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame,

and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." *Heb.* xii. 2. "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept: For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 *Cor.* xv. 20—22.

QUESTIONS.

My goods are nothing unto Thee?—What was David's delight?—Their drink-offerings of blood?—The portion of mine inheritance?—The lot is fallen unto me—what does that allude to?—A goodly heritage?—For giving me warning?—My reins chasten me?—He is on my right hand?—My glory rejoiced?—My flesh shall rest in hope, where?—In hell?—To see corruption?—Of whom are these words spoken?—Prove it from the New Testament.—Who is the Holy One?—In what sense is the last verse spoken of Christ?

PSALM XVII.

David, trusting to the justice of his cause, prays to be delivered from the snares and persecutions of his enemy. The Psalm may allude to 1 Sam. xxiii. 19—28.

1 Hear the right, O Lord, consider my complaint : and hearken unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips.

2 Let my sentence come forth from thy presence : and let thine eyes look upon the thing that is equal.

3 Thou hast proved and visited mine heart in the night-season ; thou hast tried me, and shalt find no wickedness in me : for I am utterly purposed that my mouth shall not offend.

4 Because of men's works, that are done against the words of thy lips : I have kept me from the ways of the destroyer.

5 O hold thou up my goings in thy paths : that my footsteps slip not.

6 I have called upon thee, O God, for thou shalt hear me : incline thine ear to me, and hearken unto my words.

7 Shew thy marvellous loving-kindness, thou that art the Saviour of them which put their trust in thee : from such as resist thy right hand.

8 Keep me as the apple of an eye : hide me under the shadow of thy wings,

9 From the ungodly that trouble me : mine enemies compass me round about to take away my soul.

10 They are inclosed in their own fat : and their mouth speaketh proud things.

11 They lie waiting in our way on either side : turning their eyes down to the ground ;

12 Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey : and as it were a lion's whelp lurking in secret places.

13 Up, Lord, disappoint him, and cast him down : deliver my soul from the ungodly, which is a sword of thine;

14 From the men of thy hand, O Lord, from the men, I say, and from the evil world : which have their portion in this life, whose bellies thou fillest with thy hid treasure.

15 They have children at their desire : and leave the rest of their substance for their babes.

16 But as for me, I will behold thy presence in righteousness : and when I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it.

Ver. 1. *not out of feigned lips.*] Not out of deceitful lips.

Ver. 2. *Let my sentence, &c.*] Do thou declare me innocent.

Ver. 3. *in the night-season ;*] See on *Psalm* xvi. 8.—*no wickedness . . . not offend.*] Such is the desire, the resolution, the prayer of every godly man ; "until I die I will not remove mine integrity," &c. *Job* xxvii. 5. Such, in reality, was the perfectness of Jesus Christ.

Ver. 4.] The meaning is, "*because of* the violence, which men in general show *against* (and contrary to) Thy *word, I have kept* myself at a distance from all such works and *ways* of destruction: I have spared my enemy, when I might have *destroyed* him."

Ver. 7. *marvellous*] Wonderful, great.—*thy right hand.*] Thy mighty power.

Ver. 8. *as the apple of an eye :*] As the pupil of the eye, the middle and tenderest part, carefully guarded by the eye-lid, which we shut in an instant, when danger is at hand. "Keep me tenderly and constantly:" the same sense is repeated in the latter part of the verse, where allusion is made to the affection with which a bird covers the young brood under her wings. See *Zechar.* ii. 8, and *Matt.* xxiii. 37.

Ver. 10. *They are inclosed, &c.*] Good living and the good things of this world have made them proud.

Ver. 11. *turning their eyes*] Like a lion watching his prey.—*whelp,*] The young of the lion.

Ver. 13. *which is a sword of thine :*] The Lord uses the ungodly as an instrument of punishment; but this sword is still in the Lord's hand ; the ungodly can vex the righteous no more and no longer than the Lord pleases : and

therefore they are called, in verse 14, "*the men of thy hand;*" employed by Thee, and controlled by Thee.

Ver. 14. *which have their portion, &c.*] Who have this world only for their share or lot; who "in their life-time receive their good things." *Luke* xvi. 25.—*thy hidden treasure.*] A great store of earthly blessings; with great abundance, as if taken from a large hidden treasure.

Ver. 16. *But as for me, &c.*] For my part, I will not look to the world for happiness, but to Thy favour in the way of righteousness; that so, while they who have their portion in this life will sink into the grave, and rise again from it wicked and wretched as they died, I, on the other hand, shall awake from the sleep of death, *like unto Thee*, in Thy glorious image of holiness, after which Adam was created, *Gen.* i. 27; and with this I shall be *satisfied;* full of delight, and of the most unbounded joy, at having "chosen that better part which shall not be taken from me." *Luke* x. 42.

Whatever dangers may terrify, whatever troubles disturb, whatever enemies oppress us, the Lord will hearken unto every prayer that goeth out of sincere and unfeigned lips, and will hold up our goings in His paths of righteousness, if we be mindful to walk in them. What gracious figures are employed to teach and assure us of the Lord's tender care for His people! They are kept as the tender pupil of the eye; they are safe as a bird under the shadow of the mother's wing. How does this encourage us to trust and serve Him! to look beyond this poor perishable world, in which the children of vanity have their portion; and to look forward to an eternal world of peace and joy! The hour is fast coming, when we shall lie down in the dust; and then it will signify little, whether we have had less or more of this world's treasure; but it will signify much, how we shall awake from the dust; whether in the likeness of God, or of Satan; whether to have our portion with angels, or with wicked spirits; whether to be satisfied, or to be miserable for ever. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." 1 *John* iii. 2. Think on these things.

QUESTIONS.

When will God hearken unto our prayer?—What are feigned lips?—How could David say he did no wickedness, and did not

offend?—Explain verse 4.—Marvellous?—Resist Thy right hand?—"The apple of an eye?"—The shadow of Thy wings?—How is the ungodly man a sword of God's?—How a man of His hand?—With Thy hid treasure?—In whose likeness did David hope to awake?—Awake from what?—What is meant by God's likeness?—What shall we be when so awaking?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM XVIII.

David spake unto the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul. 2 Sam. xxii. 1. *The Psalm is nearly the same with this chapter in Samuel. We may consider it (in a prophetical sense) as foretelling the deliverance of Christ and His Church from all their enemies.*

1 I will love thee, O Lord, my strength; the Lord is my stony rock, and my defence: my Saviour, my God, and my might, in whom I will trust, my buckler, the horn also of my salvation, and my refuge.

2 I will call upon the Lord, which is worthy to be praised: so shall I be safe from mine enemies.

3 The sorrows of death compassed me: and the overflowings of ungodliness made me afraid.

4 The pains of hell came about me: the snares of death overtook me.

5 In my trouble I will call upon the Lord: and complain unto my God.

6 So shall he hear my voice out of his holy temple: and my complaint shall come before him, it shall enter even into his ears.

7 The earth trembled and quaked: the very foundations also of the hills shook, and were removed, because he was wroth.

8 There went a smoke out in his presence: and a consuming fire out of his mouth, so that coals were kindled at it.

9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and it was dark under his feet.

10 He rode upon the cherubims, and did fly: he came flying upon the wings of the wind.

11 He made darkness his secret place: his pavilion round about him with dark water, and thick clouds to cover him.

12 At the brightness of his

presence his clouds removed : hailstones, and coals of fire.

13 The Lord also thundered out of heaven, and the Highest gave his thunder : hailstones, and coals of fire.

14 He sent out his arrows, and scattered them : he cast forth lightnings, and destroyed them.

15 The springs of waters were seen, and the foundations of the round world were discovered, at thy chiding, O Lord : at the blasting of the breath of thy displeasure.

16 He shall send down from on high to fetch me : and shall take me out of many waters.

17 He shall deliver me from my strongest enemy, and from them which hate me : for they are too mighty for me.

18 They prevented me in the day of my trouble : but the Lord was my upholder.

19 He brought me forth also into a place of liberty : he brought me forth, even because he had a favour unto me.

20 The Lord shall reward me after my righteous dealing : according to the cleanness of my hand shall he recompense me.

21 Because I have kept the ways of the Lord : and have not forsaken my God, as the wicked doeth.

22 For I have an eye unto all his laws : and will not cast out his commandments from me.

23 I was also uncorrupt before him : and eschewed mine own wickedness.

24 Therefore shall the Lord reward me after my righteous dealing : and according unto the cleanness of my hands in his eye-sight.

25 With the holy thou shalt be holy : and with a perfect man thou shalt be perfect.

26 With the clean thou shalt be clean : and with the froward thou shalt learn frowardness.

27 For thou shalt save the people that are in adversity : and shalt bring down the high looks of the proud.

28 Thou also shalt light my candle : the Lord my God shall make my darkness to be light.

29 For in thee I shall discomfit an host of men : and with the help of my God I shall leap over the wall.

30 The way of God is an undefiled way : the word of the Lord also is tried in the fire ; he is the defender of all them that put their trust in him.

31 For who is God, but the Lord : or who hath any strength except our God ?

32 It is God that girdeth me with strength of war : and maketh my way perfect.

33 He maketh my feet like harts' feet : and setteth me up on high.

34 He teacheth mine hands to fight : and mine arms shall break even a bow of steel.

35 Thou hast given me the defence of thy salvation : thy right hand also shall hold me up, and thy loving-correction shall make me great.

36 Thou shalt make room enough under me for to go :

that my footsteps shall not slide.

37 I will follow upon mine enemies and overtake them: neither will I turn again till I have destroyed them.

38 I will smite them, that they shall not be able to stand: but fall under my feet.

39 Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou shalt throw down mine enemies under me.

40 Thou hast made mine enemies also to turn their backs upon me: and I shall destroy them that hate me.

41 They shall cry, but there shall be none to help them: yea, even unto the Lord shall they cry, but he shall not hear them.

42 I will beat them as small as the dust before the wind: I will cast them out as the clay in the streets.

43 Thou shalt deliver me from the strivings of the people: and thou shalt make me the head of the heathen.

44 A people whom I have not known: shall serve me.

45 As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: but the strange children shall dissemble with me.

46 The strange children shall fail: and be afraid out of their prisons.

47 The Lord liveth, and blessed be my strong helper: and praised be the God of my salvation.

48 Even the God that seeth that I be avenged: and subdueth the people unto me.

49 It is he that delivereth me from my cruel enemies, and setteth me up above mine adversaries: thou shalt rid me from the wicked man.

50 For this cause will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the Gentiles: and sing praises unto thy name.

51 Great prosperity giveth he unto his King: and sheweth loving-kindness unto David his Anointed, and unto his seed for evermore.

Ver. 1. *buckler*] A small shield buckled on the arm.—*the horn, &c.*] The power of some animals consists chiefly in the *horn;* so God is called the horn, that is, the strength of His people.

Ver. 3. *compassed*] Came around me.—*overflowings, &c.*] Ungodliness coming on me like a flood.

Ver. 4. *The pains of hell*] Pains or distresses, sufficient to bring me to the *grave* (see *Ps.* xvi. 11). This verse is applied to Christ, *Acts* ii. 24.

Ver. 7 to 14.] These verses contain a very grand description of the power of Jehovah, which was manifested on behalf of David: it is described by figures taken from the awful storms on Mount Sinai, at the giving of

the law, *Exod.* xix. 16—28. David's deliverance from his enemies was a wonderful instance of the Divine power.

Ver. 9. *He bowed the heavens*] Came down as upon a cloud.

Ver. 10. *cherubims,*] Angels: He was attended by such numbers, that it seemed as if He was borne up upon them.

Ver. 11. *his pavilion*] His tent or dwelling. He dwelt in the watery cloud.

Ver. 15. *The springs of waters*] Here the figure appears to be taken from the passage of Israel through the Red Sea, *Exod.* xiv. when the waters clave asunder, and showed the bottom or foundation, to which the children of Israel went down and walked, and afterwards came out safely. This event was a sign of the deliverance and salvation of mankind by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and therefore this chapter of Exodus is appointed as one of the proper lessons for Easter-day.

Ver. 16. *out of many waters.*] Many troubles, the *overflowings of ungodliness,* ver. 3.

Ver. 18. *They prevented me*] They came before and beset me, so as to stop my going.

Ver. 20 to 26.] David, when he speaks in these verses of his purity and uprightness, must be understood to speak of himself by comparison with the wicked, "*as the wicked doeth,*" ver. 21. But, in truth, these verses more properly denote that all-perfect righteousness of the Redeemer, through which was obtained deliverance of Himself and His people.

Ver. 23. *eschewed*] Avoided, kept myself from *mine own wickedness;* he was, therefore, conscious of his guilt.

Ver. 25. *Thou shalt be holy:*] To the holy Thou wilt manifest Thyself in holiness, and not in wrath. In the *Bible version* it is, "with the *merciful* Thou wilt show Thyself *merciful.*" The meaning of the whole is, that God will be to *us* according as we are to *Him.* "Them that honour Me, I will honour," &c. 1 *Sam.* ii. 30.—*a perfect man,*] A man who desires and strives to obey God in all things. *Matt.* v. 48. 2 *Tim.* iii. 17.

Ver. 26. *the froward*] The perverse and obstinate.

Ver. 28. *shalt light my candle:*] Shalt brighten my condition, and give me joy.

Ver. 29. *discomfit*] Defeat.—*leap over the wall.*] Over the wall of a *city*, or other strong place, and thus enter as a conqueror. (See *Joshua* vi. 1, &c.)

Ver. 30. *undefiled*] Perfectly pure.—*the word, &c.*] See on *Psalm* xii. 7.

Ver. 32. *with strength of war:*] Thus also He gives to His servants their spiritual armour, enabling them to contend against the great enemy of their souls. *Ephes.* vi. 14—17.

Ver. 33. *like harts' feet:*] By the *hart* seems here meant an animal of the goat kind, that could climb up the highest mountains, and stand firmly upon the sharpest corners of a rock. The sense is; "Thou makest my feet to stand safely even in dangerous places." Some have thought it means, "Thou hast made my feet *swift*," like those of a hart or hind, so that I can pursue my enemies and overtake them (*ver.* 37).

Ver. 35. *Thy loving-correction*] Thy merciful chastenings and dealings with me. In the *Bible version* it is "*Thy gentleness.*"

Ver. 36 to 43.] How very strikingly do these verses describe the victory of Jesus over *His* enemies, and the utter ruin of the Jewish people for opposing and rejecting Him!

Ver. 41. *He shall not hear them.*] The time for mercy was past, the time for vengeance was come. *Prov.* i. 24—33.

Ver. 43. *head of the heathen.*] However true this might be of David, it belongs much more to the Son of David, who was delivered from the mad strivings of all the people, both Jewish and Gentile; and afterwards, when "His own (the Jews) received Him not," the heathen were converted to Him, and He became their head: a *strange* people (*ver.* 44), to whom He had never before been known, were brought to serve Him readily (*ver.* 45).

Ver. 45. *dissemble*] Pretend what they do not feel: some of David's enemies submitted rather through fear; as in *verse* 46, they *failed*, trembled and fainted; and

were *afraid out of their prisons*, out of those close dens or secret places, in which they had confined themselves for safety.

Ver. 48. *avenged :*] Set right and recompensed.

Ver. 49. *from the wicked man.*] From Saul, the "violent man." *Bible version.*

Ver. 50. *among the Gentiles :*] St. Paul quotes this verse, *Rom.* xv. 8—13, to show that the Gentiles would glorify God for His mercy, in bringing them to the knowledge of salvation; and this proves that the apostle considered the Psalm as foreshowing Christ, and as speaking His language.

Ver. 51. *to his King :*] To King David in the first sense: to King Messiah in the second.—*unto his seed, &c.*] To the family of David in Israel, from generation to generation, as long as the kingdom lasted; to the family of Christ for ever; to all who become His children, the sons of God, "who through faith and patience inherit the promises." *Heb.* vi. 12.

Let us love the Lord for His mercy and goodness, in the salvation of all His people: let us fear the Lord for His justice and power, in the destruction of all His enemies: let us serve the Lord with all our hearts and souls; "having respect unto the recompense of reward," as Moses and all the faithful had. *Heb.* xi. 26. Let the words and figures in this Psalm, by which the wrath of God upon earth is so awfully described, remind us of the far more tremendous vengeance, which will be executed in the latter day upon the unbelieving and the ungodly. Let us "seek the Lord while He may be found, and call upon Him while He is near," *Isaiah* lv. 6, that His Almighty power may be shown, not in destroying, but in saving us. Let us aim to walk with Him in all righteousness and true holiness; approving our hearts unto Him, and keeping ourselves from our own iniquity. Thus will He give us strength for the battle, arm us for every temptation and trial, and help us at all times: by His light we shall pass through every dark valley, even the valley of the shadow of death. The Lord liveth, and we shall live also, in His glorious and eternal kingdom. "For to this end, Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living." *Rom.* xiv. 9.

QUESTIONS.

Where is this Psalm found?—What the subject of it?—By what figures is God's vengeance here described?—Buckler?—Horn of salvation?—Compassed?—Overflowings of ungodliness?—Pains of hell?—Cherubims?—Pavilion?—Take me out of many waters?—They prevented me?—In what sense was David righteous and uncorrupt?—Who alone was perfectly so?—Eschewed mine own wickedness?—With the holy thou shalt be holy?—Froward?—Light my candle?—Discomfit?—Leap over the wall?—The word of the Lord is tried in the fire?—Maketh my feet like harts' feet?—Loving-correction?—A people whom I have not known shall serve me?—Dissemble?—Avenged?—Out of their prisons?—Where is the 50th verse quoted?—To whom does God give prosperity?—What do you mean by David's *seed?*

THE FOURTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM XIX.

The heavens proclaim the Creator's glory to all lands; and the sun is the emblem of the Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ, the true light, who discovers His Gospel to the world: this therefore is one of the proper Psalms for Christmas-day. We have in the latter part of it a beautiful description of the word of God, and of the effects which it produces.

1 The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.

2 One day telleth another: and one night certifieth another.

3 There is neither speech nor language: but their voices are heard among them.

4 Their sound is gone out into all lands: and their words into the ends of the world.

5 In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun: which cometh forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course.

6 It goeth forth from the uttermost part of the heaven, and runneth about unto the end of it again: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

7 The law of the Lord is an

undefiled law, converting the soul : the testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth wisdom unto the simple.

8 The statutes of the Lord are right, and rejoice the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, and giveth light unto the eyes.

9 The fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever : the judgements of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold : sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb.

11 Moreover, by them is thy servant taught : and in keeping of them there is great reward.

12 Who can tell how oft he offendeth : O cleanse thou me from my secret faults.

13 Keep thy servant also from presumptuous sins, lest they get the dominion over me : so shall I be undefiled, and innocent from the great offence.

14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart : be always acceptable in thy sight,

15 O Lord : my strength, and my redeemer.

Ver. 1. *the firmament*] The whole space of air and sky, surrounding the earth. *Gen.* i. 6—8.—*his handy-work.*] The work of His hand, of His power.

Ver. 2. *one day telleth another, &c.*] Day after day, each returning day, declares the wonders of God; as if one day told it to another, and thus kept up the knowledge. And each night also certifies or declares the same. The sun by day: the moon and stars by night.

Ver. 3.] The heavens, with their various changes, cannot speak; but they declare the truth as plainly as if voices were heard among them. Their beauty, and grandeur, and wonderful order serve as a powerful voice.

Ver. 4. *Their sound, &c.*] St. Paul, *Rom.* x. 18, has applied this verse to the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, *i. e.* to the world at large, after the Jews had refused to listen to it. And therefore we may consider David as foreshowing, in the Spirit, that the light of God's truth, the light of salvation, like that of the heavens, should one day visit the whole world, by the shining and spreading of the Gospel of Christ.

Ver. 5. *a tabernacle*] A dwelling-place like a tent, in the centre of the heavens.—*as a bridegroom*] It is re-

markable that *the Sun of Righteousness*, even Jesus Christ, is frequently compared to a bridegroom. *Malachi* iv. 2. *John* iii. 27—29. And the Church is His *bride*. *Isaiah* liv. 5. *Rev.* xxi. 9, 10; xxii. 17.—*as a giant*] As a strong man. *Bib. Vers.*

Ver. 7. *the law, &c.*] The *Word* of God is pure and perfect; turning the soul from sin and the world, to holiness and to God. From the teaching of the outward heavens, David goes on to the teaching of spiritual and heavenly truth.—*the testimony*] That which bears witness of the Lord. By His word God testifies or shows Himself and His holy will.—*the simple.*] The single-hearted who humbly and willingly receive it as their guide.

Ver. 8. *The statutes*] Those things or observances which God has appointed as the means of grace and blessing. They are often called ordinances; such as the sabbath, worship, &c.—*unto the eyes.*] To the understanding, to the eyes of the *mind.*

Ver. 9. *The fear*] Not a slavish dread, but a holy principle of reverence.—*the judgements*] The rules by which He has declared that He will judge; the warnings, counsels, threatenings, promises.

Ver. 10. *sweeter*] Sweeter to the soul than honey to the taste.

Ver. 11. *great reward.*] Blessedness here and hereafter.

Ver. 12. *how oft he offendeth:*] David means to confess, as every one must, not only that he was continually offending against this perfect law, but that he was offending oftener than he could discover; partly from ignorance and forgetfulness, partly from weakness and corruption of heart: and therefore he prays to be made clean from his *secret faults*, from those which are unknown even to himself. Let such also be our prayer.

Ver. 13. *from presumptuous*] From wilful sins; from persisting in any sin which is known to be such, as in the case of the children of Israel. *Jerem.* xl. 17, &c.—*the dominion*] The mastery: Lest I become the slave of such sins.—*undefiled,*] Sincere and uncorrupt.—*and innocent*

from the great offence.] Of wilfully rebelling against Thee, and thus of falling away.

Ver. 14. *the meditation*] The thoughts and desires of my heart.

The glories of the heavens bespeak plainly, and with the loudest voice, the power and greatness of our Creator; and fill the soul of man with wonder and with awe. Who can behold them, and say, or think, that "there is no God?" None but "the fool." *Psalm* xiv. 1. And as the heavens declare the being of God, so does His blessed word declare to us His perfections and ways. O "that we may in such wise hear and read and learn it," that our souls may be converted, that we may be wise unto salvation, that our heart may rejoice, that our understanding may be enlightened, that we may worship and "serve the Lord with holy fear," and have all our actions governed by His righteous judgments! May the Bible be more precious to us, and more desired, than all the treasures of the world; may we find it sweeter than the sweetest of earthly gratifications; may we be so taught by its life-giving doctrines and commandments, as to be keeping them all, and looking surely to the great reward! And O that we may deeply feel our own unworthiness, our weakness and sinfulness; and watch and pray to be cleansed from every *fault*, known and unknown! Let there be no sin wilfully committed against the "law of life;" no habit of sin; no such great offence; so that God may never give us over to the chosen wickedness of our own hearts, and thus leave us to perish in our own presumption. Let us "pray without ceasing," that all our words and meditations may be such as God will accept; that we may show our faith in the Bible, and our love for the Bible, by "walking worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing," *Col.* i. 10, of the Lord, our strength, and our Redeemer.

QUESTIONS.

What do the heavens declare?—The firmament?—Handy-work?—What is the meaning of verse 2?—Of verse 3? Where is the 4th verse quoted?—To what does St. Paul apply the verse?—A tabernacle?—To whom may the sun be compared?—How does he come forth?—How rejoice?—What is the law of the Lord?—What does it do?—The testimony?—The simple?—The statutes?—The commandment?—Light unto the eyes?—The *fear* of the Lord?—The judgments?—How

are they to be desired?—Sweeter than what?—How *sweeter?*—What is there in keeping of them?—*Secret* faults?—*Presumptuous* sins?—The great offence?—What should we pray that our words and meditations may be?—What great truths are taught in this Psalm?

PSALM XX.

Composed by David as a prayer of the ancient Church for the safety and success of the king on some great occasion: and as David was a type of Christ, in his contests and his victories, we may regard it as a prayer of the Christian Church, for the triumph of her Lord and King Messiah.

1 The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble: the Name of the God of Jacob defend thee.
2 Send thee help from the sanctuary: and strengthen thee out of Sion;
3 Remember all thy offerings: and accept thy burnt-sacrifice;
4 Grant thee thy heart's desire: and fulfil all thy mind.
5 We will rejoice in thy salvation, and triumph in the Name of the Lord our God: the Lord perform all thy petitions.
6 Now know I, that the Lord helpeth his Anointed, and will hear him from his holy heaven: even with the wholesome strength of his right hand.
7 Some put their trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God.
8 They are brought down, and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.
9 Save, Lord, and hear us, O King of heaven: when we call upon thee.

Ver. 1. *the Name*] The power, goodness, providence of God.

Ver. 2. *from the sanctuary:*] From the tabernacle, from the mercy-seat in the ark, which had lately been removed to mount Sion. 1 *Chron.* xv. 25, &c.

Ver. 3. *accept*] The acceptance of a sacrifice was sometimes shown by fire from heaven coming down and consuming it. *Levit.* ix. 24. 1 *Kings* xviii. 38, 39. 2 *Chron.* vii. 1.

Ver. 5. *in thy salvation,*] In thy preservation, O king:

expecting to succeed, because we are engaged in the service of the Lord of Hosts.

Ver. 6. *Now know I,*] Perhaps in this verse David himself may be speaking in reply to the prayer of his people; and in the last three verses, David and his people may be joining together in the sacred song.—*wholesome*] Helping, saving.

Ver. 7. *in horses:*] This was one of the besetting sins of Israel. See *Deut.* xvii. 16. *Isaiah* xxxi. 1.

It is our bounden duty to pray for our rulers; much of their success in governing, much of our prosperity as a people, depend upon this duty. Many find great fault with a king or governor; perhaps they have never heartily prayed to God on his behalf: and if so, they at least have no right to find fault, because they have neglected the surest method of making a ruler wise. "The hearts of kings are in God's rule and governance; He disposes them as it seemeth best to His godly wisdom:" and therefore it is our duty to pray to God for them; as the people did for David, to good purpose; and as the disciples of the Son of David are directed to do, "for kings and for all that are in authority." 1 *Tim.* ii. 2. Every country is too apt to be trusting in its own strength, which is but a "broken reed." Let our hope be placed in the King of Heaven: the "King of kings and Lord of lords."

QUESTIONS.

What is this Psalm?—For whom do they pray?—Of whom was David a type?—The name of the God of Jacob?—Sanctuary?—What was the sign of a sacrifice being accepted?—Wholesome?—In what should we not trust?—In what should we trust?—What should we do for kings and rulers?—Repeat a passage in which this is commanded.—Horses?—Why was it sinful to trust in them?

PSALM XXI.

The former Psalm was the prayer of Israel for David, and of the Church for the Messiah; this is a song of praise to God for answering those prayers. Even the Jewish writers themselves agree, that this Psalm relates to the

Messiah, i. e. to Christ. There are many passages in it which apply rather to Him than to David, ver. 4—6, *and point to the ascension of Christ into the heavens, after He had triumphed over His enemies. For this reason the Psalm is appointed for* Ascension-day.

1 The King shall rejoice in thy strength, O Lord : exceeding glad shall he be of thy salvation.

2 Thou hast given him his heart's desire : and hast not denied him the request of his lips.

3 For thou shalt prevent him with the blessings of goodness : and shalt set a crown of pure gold upon his head.

4 He asked life of thee, and thou gavest him a long life : even for ever and ever.

5 His honour is great in thy salvation : glory and great worship shalt thou lay upon him.

6 For thou shalt give him everlasting felicity : and make him glad with the joy of thy countenance.

7 And why? because the king putteth his trust in the Lord : and in the mercy of the Most Highest he shall not miscarry.

8 All thine enemies shall feel thy hand : thy right hand shall find out them that hate thee.

9 Thou shalt make them like a fiery oven in time of thy wrath : the Lord shall destroy them in his displeasure, and the fire shall consume them.

10 Their fruit shalt thou root out of the earth : and their seed from among the children of men.

11 For they intended mischief against thee : and imagined such a device as they are not able to perform.

12 Therefore shalt thou put them to flight : and the strings of thy bow shalt thou make ready against the face of them.

13 Be thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength : so will we sing, and praise thy power.

Ver. 2. *his heart's desire, &c.*] According to the petitions in the former Psalm, *ver.* 4, 5.

Ver. 3. *prevent*] Thou shalt go before and provide for him.

Ver. 4. *even for ever and ever.*] Thou didst prolong his life upon earth ; Thou wilt continue the kingdom in his family, from generation to generation : and continue it in Christ *for ever.* Christ "being raised from the dead dieth no more," &c. *Rom.* vi. 9.

Ver. 5. *His honour is great, &c.*] This is his glory, that he has been delivered and saved by Thee.—*great worship*] Great majesty and honour. See on *Psalm* iii. 3.

Ver. 6. *everlasting felicity :*] Thou hast made him most blessed for ever. *Bib. Vers.*

Ver. 7. *shall not miscarry.*] Shall not fail.

Ver. 9. *like a fiery oven*] Like fuel in a fiery oven, thine enemies shall perish quickly.

Ver. 10. *Their fruit*] Their children; the same kind of figure as *their seed.*

Ver. 11. *such a device*] Such a plan of mischief.

Ver. 12. *the strings of thy bow*] Thou shalt smite them as a bowman does his foes in battle.

If David rejoiced greatly in the honour bestowed upon him, as king of Israel, what is the joy of our Redeemer in His exaltation to the throne of heaven, and in the salvation of His people! And if Israel, from love to David and his government, rejoiced and praised God for him; how great should be our joy to behold by faith our King thus glorified, how great our praises for all the blessings which we expect from Him! For, being "most blessed Himself for ever," He is the fountain of blessings, and "the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." *Heb.* v. 9. But how will they escape who are enemies to this glorious King and Saviour?—How did the wicked Jews escape?—They were consumed as in a "fiery oven:" and this is a fearful sign and emblem of the destruction of all the wicked on the day of judgment. O let us repent, believe, obey: that we may sing the praises of our Lord and King for ever and ever.

QUESTIONS.

Explain the subject of this Psalm.—Thou shalt prevent him?—How had David a long life, even for ever?—His honour is great in thy salvation?—Worship?—Everlasting felicity?—Miscarry?—Like a fiery oven?—What is that a sign of?—Their fruit?—Device?—The strings of thy bow?—What does this Psalm teach us?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM XXII.

This is one of the proper Psalms for Good Friday, and very wisely so appointed; because however well it may ex-

press the sorrows and sufferings of David, it is far more suited to the case of our blessed Lord: and some of the words can be applied to Him only. In ver. 1—21, *are described the agonies and death of Jesus; the rest is a hymn of joy, pointing to the blessed fruits of His death.*

1 My God, my God, look upon me: why hast thou forsaken me; and art so far from my health, and from the words of my complaint?

2 O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not: and in the night-season also I take no rest.

3 And thou continuest holy: O thou worship of Israel.

4 Our fathers hoped in thee: they trusted in thee, and thou didst deliver them.

5 They called upon thee, and were holpen: they put their trust in thee, and were not confounded.

6 But as for me, I am a worm, and no man: a very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people.

7 All they that see me, laugh me to scorn: they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying,

8 He trusted in God, that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, if he will have him.

9 But thou art he that took me out of my mother's womb: thou wast my hope, when I hanged yet upon my mother's breasts.

10 I have been left unto thee ever since I was born: thou art my God, even from my mother's womb.

11 O go not from me, for trouble is hard at hand: and there is none to help me.

12 Many oxen are come about me: fat bulls of Basan close me in on every side.

13 They gape upon me with their mouths: as it were a ramping and a roaring lion.

14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart also in the midst of my body is even like melting wax.

15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my gums: and thou shalt bring me into the dust of death.

16 For many dogs are come about me: and the counsel of the wicked layeth siege against me.

17 They pierced my hands and my feet; I may tell all my bones: they stand staring and looking upon me.

18 They part my garments among them: and cast lots upon my vesture.

19 But be not thou far from me, O Lord: thou art my succour; haste thee to help me.

20 Deliver my soul from the sword: my darling from the power of the dog.

21 Save me from the lion's mouth: thou hast heard me also from among the horns of the unicorns.

22 I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

23 O praise the Lord, ye that fear him: magnify him, all ye of the seed of Jacob, and fear him, all ye seed of Israel;

24 For he hath not despised nor abhorred the low estate of the poor: he hath not hid his face from him; but when he called unto him, he heard him.

25 My praise is of thee, in the great congregation: my vows will I perform in the sight of them that fear him.

26 The poor shall eat, and be satisfied: they that seek after the Lord, shall praise him; your heart shall live for ever.

27 All the ends of the world shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him.

28 For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the Governor among the people.

29 All such as be fat upon earth: have eaten and worshipped.

30 All they that go down into the dust shall kneel before him: and no man hath quickened his own soul.

31 My seed shall serve him: they shall be counted unto the Lord for a generation.

32 They shall come, and the heavens shall declare his righteousness: unto a people that shall be born, whom the Lord hath made.

Ver. 1. *My God, my God,*] These we know were the very words of our Lord, when hanging on the cross. *Matt.* xxvii. 46.

Ver. 2. *thou hearest not:*] My prayer is not granted. Christ also prayed, that "if the Father were willing, the cup might pass from Him;" but it did not. Let none be discouraged; the merciful purposes of God are still carried on.

Ver. 3. *thou continuest holy:*] Whether Thou grantest the prayers of Thy servants or not, whether they suffer or rejoice, Thou art the same for ever!

Ver. 5. *were holpen:*] Were helped.

Ver. 6. *a worm,*] So was Jesus treated, and *like a worm* He submitted; being humble, silent, harmless, when oppressed and trodden under foot.

Ver. 8.] When Christ was on the cross, "the chief-priests, mocking Him, said, He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him." *Matt.* xxvii. 41. 43.

Ver. 9. *Thou art He, &c.*] What comfort to the troubled spirit to remember the former mercies of the Lord!

Ver. 12. *Many oxen*] Enemies bold and strong as oxen. Basan or Bashan was a rich pasture country, and the animals were highly fed and fierce. Such also were the Jews. *Deut.* xxxii. 14, 15.

Ver. 13. *ramping*] Leaping about after his prey.

Ver. 14. *like water,*] Weak and making no resistance. —*my bones are out of joint:*] Thus it was with Christ, when stretched upon the cross. My heart fainting and *melting* as wax by the fire.

Ver. 15. *a potsherd,*] A broken piece of an earthen pot or vessel.—*my tongue cleaveth*] "Jesus saith, I thirst." *John* xix. 28.

Ver. 16. *many dogs*] Many savage people hunting for my life, as dogs after a helpless animal. How true was this of Jesus! As the Jewish rulers are compared to "bulls," so are the soldiers and others to "dogs;" and it is remarkable, that the Jews afterwards called the Gentiles dogs. *Matt.* xv. 26.—*layeth siege*] Hath *enclosed* me. *Bib. Vers.*

Ver. 17. *They pierced, &c.*] We know not how these words are to be applied to David; but they describe in a very exact and wonderful manner, the nailing of Christ to the cross; and, what is more, this kind of punishment was not known in David's day, nor ever used in Israel: it was a Roman punishment, invented many hundred years after; and this makes the prophecy so much the more striking, as Christ was crucified by the Roman law.—*they stand*] The people stand.

Ver. 18.] See *John* xix. 23, 24. This also was fulfilled in Christ, but not in David, in whose history we find nothing like it.

Ver. 20. *from the sword:*] From the instrument of death, whatever it might be. Zechariah also foretels the death of Christ under the same figure: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd," &c. *Zech.* xiii. 7.—*my darling,*] My dear life.—*of the dog,*] See on ver. 16.

Ver. 21. *from the lion's mouth:—from among the horns of the unicorns.*] From the power of my enemies, who may be compared to these wild beasts. The unicorn was a fierce animal with one horn, supposed to be what is now

called the rhinoceros. Save me from the great enemy, the devil and his wicked agents.

Ver. 22.] Here the subject changes from sorrow to joy and praise. David sees by faith his preservation and his victory; and declares, by the spirit of prophecy, the triumph of Jesus, and the consequences thereof. This verse is quoted, *Heb.* ii. 11, where the Apostle shows, that in these words of David, Christ is to be understood, as calling His disciples brethren. After his resurrection, He "declared the name" of God, by His apostles, unto His "brethren;" and caused the "congregation," or Church, to resound with praises.

Ver. 24. *abhorred*] Disdained, hated.—*of the poor:*] Of the oppressed and seemingly helpless. Christ was raised from His "low estate;" and his poor afflicted brethren may take comfort from this verse; for if they suffer in His spirit, they will be raised in His glory.

Ver. 25. *my vows, &c.*] David, after his deliverance, offered the sacrifices which he vowed and promised. *Psalm* lxvi. 12—14. And Christ fulfilled all that was written, to the glory of God and the benefit of His Church.

Ver. 26. *be satisfied:*] "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled: blessed are the poor in spirit," &c. *Matt.* v. 6. 3.

Ver. 27. *All the ends of the world*] Nothing like this happened in David's time; although his kingdom was increased: it clearly foretels the spreading of the Gospel over all the world.

Ver. 29. *have eaten*] It means they *shall* eat and worship. (*Bib. Vers.*) All the rich and great (as well as the poor, ver. 26) shall be invited to the heavenly feast; they must come and partake, they must accept the summons, or be cast out and perish.

Ver. 30. *into the dust*] All the dying shall cry for His mercy, and own His power; for no man *quickeneth,* or giveth life to *his own soul;* no man can keep it alive, much less raise it again from the dust. "I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord." *John* xi. 25.

Ver. 31. *My seed*] My children's children. Thus a seed of spiritual children arose from Christ, "a chosen

generation, a holy nation, a peculiar people," &c. 1 *Pet.* ii. 9.

Ver. 32. *unto a people, &c.*] Unto future ages: to a people that shall be born of God. David is foretelling the time when believers should have all these great truths fully made known to them, and should "declare the righteousness of God" in the salvation of his people through Christ.

Through the whole of this Psalm we "behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." The Jews themselves allow, that it was written by David above a thousand years before the birth of Christ, and yet the particulars of His sufferings and death are related in the most striking manner; in such a manner as to be more like an account of what had already taken place, than of what should come to pass so many hundred years after. And how could David have known all this? How, but by the teaching of Him, who knoweth all things, past, present, and to come? Who can deny, that David was one of those "holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost?" 2 *Pet.* i. 21. And who can deny that in this Psalm God has set His seal to the truth of the Gospel? Because, as he inspired David to declare such things, it is a proof that Christ was ordained of old, in the counsel of heaven, to die for the salvation of man. O let us bless God for this unspeakable mercy, and for having so revealed and certified it by the mouth of His prophet. Let us believe in this suffering Lord, this "man of sorrows," who "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." *Phil.* ii. 8. Let us love Him, and live in Him, as a faithful "seed," and a chosen "generation:" so live, that we may die in Him; that He may "*quicken* our mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in us," *Rom.* viii. 11, and raise us from the grave to glory.

QUESTIONS.

"My God, My God," who uttered these words?—and when?—Were holpen?—"I am a worm," who is here meant?—"He trusted in God," &c., when were these words fulfilled?—Many oxen?—Bulls of Basan?—Ramping lion?—Potsherd?—Many dogs?—Layeth siege?—Of whom did David speak, verses 17 and 18?—My darling?—Unicorn?—How was verse 27 fulfilled?—Explain verse 29.—They that go down into the dust shall kneel before Him?—No man hath quickened his own soul?—What may we learn from this Psalm?

PSALM XXIII.

David rejoiceth in the care of the Lord as his shepherd, and in the assurance of His support through life, in death, and for ever.

1 The Lord is my shepherd: therefore can I lack nothing.
2 He shall feed me in a green pasture: and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.
3 He shall convert my soul: and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake.
4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff comfort me.
5 Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me: thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.
6 But thy loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Ver. 1. *the Lord is my shepherd:*] He takes care of me, as a shepherd does of his flock. Jesus declares Himself to be "the good shepherd," and was *foretold* by Isaiah under this very figure, ch. xl. 9—11, and the words of the prophet show that Christ was at once the Shepherd of His people, and "the Lord God." See *John* x. 1—18. 26—31. No doubt the Psalm contains allusions to Jesus as "the great Shepherd of the sheep," *Heb.* xiii. 20, and "the chief Shepherd." 1 *Pet.* v. 4.—*lack nothing.*] Want nothing.

Ver. 2. *He shall feed me, &c.*] He will provide for me every good thing, as a shepherd does for his sheep, by feeding them in green pastures, and leading them to clear and gentle streams.

Ver. 3. *convert*] Turn me from wandering, and lift me up when I fall.

Ver. 4. *through the valley, &c.*] In the *darkest* hour of trouble, yea, even at last in death itself.—*thy rod and thy staff*] A rod or sceptre was in the hand of a king; a staff in the hand of a shepherd: so the sense is, "Thy *kingly* power and Thy *shepherd's* care shall protect, support, and comfort me."

Ver. 5. *a table*] The blessings expected by David are compared to a *feast*, at which it was usual to "anoint the head with oil," and to fill the "cup" of a favoured guest quite "full." Thus Benjamin's mess. *Gen.* xliii. 34.

Ver. 6. *for ever.*] As long as I live upon earth; for ever, in heaven.

What can they want who have Jehovah for their Shepherd? He knows and pities their weaknesses, and their sorrows; and He will certainly, if they trust in Him, guide them through all, and "give them all things that be needful both for their souls and bodies." He will heal their sins, and make them a righteous people; and then they can have nothing to fear. For this end the good Shepherd laid down His life for the sheep, when they had strayed and gone from Him: and He who laid down His life for them when enemies, will not be wanting to them when they are His friends: He will spread before them His feast of spiritual blessings, anoint them with His Holy Spirit, and give them to drink of the cup of salvation. Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ, if we do not separate ourselves from it. The Lord, our Saviour and King, will provide for us on earth; will be with us in the dark passage of death, and lighten it with His glory: and, at last, will conduct us to heaven; where we shall dwell for ever, "one fold under one Shepherd:" a fold, into which no enemy enters, and from which no friend departs; where we shall rest from all our labours and cares; where "we shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more. But the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed us, and lead us to living fountains of waters." *Rev.* vii. 16, 17.

QUESTIONS.

Who is your shepherd?—What does this mean?—Where shall He feed?—And whither lead you?—What will He do to your soul?—And bring you forth into what?—And when you walk where?—What then?—Why will you fear no evil?—Thy rod?—Thy staff?—A table?—What is meant by anointing the head with oil?—And having the cup full?—Where is Jesus spoken of as a shepherd?

THE FIFTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM XXIV.

David brought up the ark with great pomp and procession from the house of Obed-edom to the tabernacle on Mount Sion, 2 Sam. vi. 1 Chron. xv., *and on this occasion the Psalm was composed and sung. But the carrying up of the ark to Sion represents the going up of Christ to heaven* (see Psalm xv.), *and therefore this Psalm is used by our Church on* Ascension-day.

1 The earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is : the compass of the world, and they that dwell therein.

2 For he hath founded it upon the seas : and prepared it upon the floods.

3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord : or who shall rise up in his holy place ?

4 Even he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart : and that hath not lift up his mind unto vanity, nor sworn to deceive his neighbour.

5 He shall receive the blessing from the Lord : and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

6 This is the generation of them that seek him : even of them that seek thy face, O Jacob.

7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors : and the King of glory shall come in.

8 Who is the King of glory : it is the Lord strong and mighty, even the Lord mighty in battle.

9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors : and the King of glory shall come in.

10 Who is the King of glory : even the Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.

Ver. 1. *compass :*] The whole extent.

Ver. 2. *founded it upon the seas, &c.*] The seas keep their place below or within the earth ; and so do the floods ; and therefore the earth is said to be founded, or prepared, upon them.

Ver. 3. *Who shall ascend, &c.*] Though all the earth is the Lord's, yet He has a favoured hill and a holy place on Mount Sion ; and the question is this, " what manner of

persons ought they to be," who would have the honour of going up with the ark upon this hill? Who are they whom God will accept?

Ver. 4.] This verse is the answer to verse 3, showing the character of God's true people.—*clean hands,*] Hands not stained or defiled with sin.—*unto vanity,*] Unto false gods of any sort, which are often called *vain* or *vanity.* 2 Kings xvii. 15.

Ver. 5. *righteousness*] The reward of righteousness.

Ver. 6. *This is the generation*] Such only are God's people in deed and in truth.—*thy face, O Jacob.*] Thy presence, O God of Jacob.

Ver. 7. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates,*] Sometimes the *upper part* of the gate lifted up to make more room, and sometimes the gate was altogether opened by being lifted up, instead of turning on hinges as our gates do.—*ye everlasting doors:*] Ye doors, within which the ark is to abide for ever; that is, as long as it lasts: it was not to be removed from Mount Sion.—*the King of glory*] He was present on the mercy-seat in the ark, and therefore entered with the ark.

The seventh verse is supposed to have been sung by a part of the procession at the gates, demanding admission for the ark and the King of glory. Then some other voices from within demand, "Who is the King of glory?" To this the answer was, "It is the Lord strong and mighty, even the Lord mighty in battle."—Then in verse 9 there is the same address over again, "Lift up your heads," &c. and the same question in verse 10, "Who is the King of glory?" To which the answer is, "even the Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory." And thus do we believe that the Lord Jesus after His resurrection, went up with the holy angels into heaven; commanding, as it were, the everlasting door to open for the entrance of Him, who was indeed the King of glory; the Lord mighty in battle over Satan and every enemy; the Lord of hosts Himself.

When the gates of heaven were opened for the return of their triumphant Lord, they were opened for His people also—for all who will follow the Captain of their salvation through suffering to glory. But be it well remembered, that His people must be

distinguished from the rest of mankind, not by name only, but by their life and conduct. God will accept no service from deceitful lips, from unclean hands, or an unholy heart. The deceiver and the ungodly may crowd into His courts upon earth, but they are not accepted there: and into heaven they will not be admitted. O let us now open our hearts to receive the King of glory; "strong and mighty" the Lord is, able to save and to destroy. May He make manifest His might in our salvation! May He enable us to conquer as He conquered, to rise as He rose, to ascend as He ascended; that when, at last, He shall enter the heavenly palace, with the holy angels, and with all His redeemed people, we may be numbered with His saints in glory everlasting!

QUESTIONS.

Whose is the earth?—Upon what is it founded and prepared?—What do you mean by this?—Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?—This is the generation of them that seek Him?—What was the subject of this Psalm?—How were the last four verses sung?—Who is the King of glory?

PSALM XXV.

This beautiful Psalm, composed in some time of great distress, abounds with prayer for deliverance, and for grace to walk uprightly; and with meditations on the gracious dealings of God with His servants.

1 Unto thee, O Lord, will I lift up my soul; my God, I have put my trust in thee: O let me not be confounded, neither let mine enemies triumph over me.

2 For all they that hope in thee shall not be ashamed: but such as transgress without a cause shall be put to confusion.

3 Show me thy ways, O Lord: and teach me thy paths.

4 Lead me forth in thy truth, and learn me: for thou art the God of my salvation; in thee hath been my hope all the day long.

5 Call to remembrance, O Lord, thy tender mercies: and thy loving-kindnesses, which have been ever of old.

6 O remember not the sins and offences of my youth: but according to thy mercy think thou upon me, O Lord, for thy goodness.

7 Gracious and righteous is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

8 Them that are meek shall he guide in judgement: and

such as are gentle, them shall he learn his way.

9 All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth: unto such as keep his covenant, and his testimonies.

10 For thy name's sake, O Lord: be merciful unto my sin, for it is great.

11 What man is he, that feareth the Lord: him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.

12 His soul shall dwell at ease: and his seed shall inherit the land.

13 The secret of the Lord is among them that fear him: and he will show them his covenant.

14 Mine eyes are ever looking unto the Lord: for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.

15 Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me, for I am desolate and in misery.

16 The sorrows of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my troubles.

17 Look upon my adversity and misery: and forgive me all my sin.

18 Consider mine enemies, how many they are: and they bear a tyrannous hate against me.

19 O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be confounded, for I have put my trust in thee.

20 Let perfectness and righteous dealing wait upon me: for my hope hath been in thee.

21 Deliver Israel, O God: out of all his troubles.

Ver. 2. *For all they, &c.*] For none of them that hope in Thee shall be ashamed.—*transgress without a cause*] Such as hate and persecute me, though I have given them no offence, no just reason for it.

Ver. 5, 6.] Remember, O Lord, Thy past mercies, and not my past sins. David's whole trust was in God's undeserved mercy; he knew that the Lord had been merciful of old, and he now shows his faith in the unchangeableness of Jehovah. *James* i. 17. We have here an example of prayer, a deep sense of sin, and a trust in the Lord's goodness and grace.

Ver. 8. *in judgement:*] In choosing what is right.

Ver. 13. *The secret of the Lord*] The knowledge of His ways, the comfort of His grace; called a secret, because they cannot be known or understood, unless the Lord reveal them; and He will not show His favour or His ways to the wicked; to them the "covenant" of God, His promises and word, are a *secret* not at all understood.

Ver. 14. *out of the net.*] Out of the snare which my

enemies have laid for me. It is a figure from the fowler, *Prov.* i. 17, in very common use.

Ver. 15. *desolate*] Without comfort or friend.

Ver. 16. *enlarged*:] Increased.

Ver. 18. *a tyrannous hate*] A cruel hatred.

Ver. 21. *Deliver Israel,*] David prays for his Church and people, as well as for himself; and so should we. *Eph.* vi. 18, 19. 1 *Tim.* ii. 1, &c.

David "lifted up his soul;" and in vain will our voices be lifted up in prayer, unless our souls be lifted up to God: and when we think of the sins and offences of our younger years, and all our lives long, how can we help pouring forth our hearts to God for His mercy?—It is well for us that He may be found upon his mercy-seat, from which He has heard the prayers of His people, and blessed them, in all past ages. O let us pray to be forgiven, and thus to be led and taught by Him. We know nothing without the teaching of His Spirit and His word; and He teaches none but those who humbly and heartily desire to be taught and led. The children of this world may boast of their learning and knowledge; they may read the Bible, and think themselves wise; but they know nothing as they ought to know; they have no true and saving knowledge; their hearts have learned nothing, their lives have gained nothing; God is, in a great measure, a stranger to them; and so He will be, till they seek and serve Him with a contrite heart. Worldly wisdom they may have: but they cannot be wise unto salvation: "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding." *Job* xxviii. 28.

QUESTIONS.

What did David unto the Lord?—How did his enemies "transgress without a cause?"—What did he pray God to remember?—And what not to remember?—Whom will the Lord teach?—The secret of the Lord?—Out of the net?—Desolate?—Enlarged?—Tyrannous hate?—For whom did David pray, besides himself?—What does this teach us?—Where else are we taught the same?

PSALM XXVI.

David appeals to God for his innocence of the charges laid against him by his enemies; and resolves to continue in his uprightness.

1 Be thou my judge, O Lord, for I have walked innocently: my trust hath been also in the Lord, therefore shall I not fall.

2 Examine me, O Lord, and prove me: try out my reins and my heart.

3 For thy loving-kindness is ever before mine eyes: and I will walk in thy truth.

4 I have not dwelt with vain persons: neither will I have fellowship with the deceitful.

5 I have hated the congregation of the wicked: and will not sit among the ungodly.

6 I will wash my hands in innocency, O Lord: and so will I go to thine altar;

7 That I may show the voice of thanksgiving: and tell of all thy wondrous works.

8 Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house: and the place where thine honour dwelleth.

9 O shut not up my soul with the sinners: nor my life with the blood-thirsty;

10 In whose hands is wickedness: and their right hand is full of gifts.

11 But as for me, I will walk innocently: O deliver me, and be merciful unto me.

12 My foot standeth right: I will praise the Lord in the congregations.

Ver. 1. *I have walked innocently:*] I have done nothing against my enemy Saul.

Ver. 2. *my reins*] My secret thoughts. *Psalm* vii. 10.

Ver. 3. *thy loving-kindness*] This is my encouragement to do the thing that is right.

Ver. 4. *with vain persons:*] With the heathen, or with those who plotted against Saul. David has been driven away from the people and the worship of God; and yet he did not, in his banishment, *have fellowship*, that is, live and mix with enemies, or with the wicked.

Ver. 6. *I will wash, &c.*] When I wash my hands, as a sign of my innocence, I will be really innocent. It was a custom for a man to wash his hands as a sign that his character was clean and clear. *Deut.* xxi. 6, 7. *Matt.* xxvii. 24. The Jews washed their hands before prayer, as a token of their repentance; and thus David therefore, looking forward to his return from banishment, declares that he

will then go to the altar and worship, not only with clean hands, but with a clear conscience.

Ver. 8. *thine honour*] The place where Thy glory is manifested, the tabernacle.

Ver. 9. *and shut not up, &c.*] Let not my soul be gathered or numbered with them.

Ver. 10. *gifts.*] With which they bribed men to do mischief.

Ver. 12. *my foot standeth right:*] I am in the way of righteousness.

He that walks uprightly will never fear any search or inquiry into his conduct. Though his lot be cast among the wicked, he need not fear, if he shuns their evil counsels, and keeps from their evil ways: whatever troubles or dangers surround him, he may safely leave his cause with God, and wait for the end in holy peace. And nothing but a good conscience can ever give such confidence as this: God knows the heart, and He is a righteous judge; rash and foolish, therefore, must that man be, who would dare appeal to Him for that which is not true. No pretence, no outward action or appearance, can ever deceive the Almighty. Let us never attempt so hopeless and wicked a thing. Especially in our worship, let the heart be earnest and sincere: when the knees are bended, let the soul be humble; when the hands are raised in prayer, let the affections mount up to the throne of grace; and let us not go into God's presence with any unrepented sin. "Be not deceived: God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." *Gal.* vi. 7.

QUESTIONS.

Why does David call God to be his judge?—My reins and my heart?—What encouragement had he?—With vain persons?—Fellowship?—I will wash my hands in innocency?—Thine honour?—Where did God's honour dwell?—Shut not up my soul with the sinners?—My foot standeth right?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM XXVII.

David, in the greatest distress and danger, expresses his entire confidence in God, and finds comfort in prayer.

1 The Lord is my light, and my salvation; whom then shall I fear: the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid?

2 When the wicked, even mine enemies, and my foes, came upon me, to eat up my flesh: they stumbled and fell.

3 Though an host of men were laid against me, yet shall not my heart be afraid: and though there rose up war against me, yet will I put my trust in him.

4 One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require: even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the fair beauty of the Lord and to visit his temple.

5 For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his tabernacle: yea, in the secret place of his dwelling shall he hide me, and set me up upon a rock of stone.

6 And now shall he lift up mine head: above mine enemies round about me.

7 Therefore will I offer in his dwelling an oblation with great gladness: I will sing, and speak praises unto the Lord.

8 Hearken unto my voice, O Lord, when I cry unto thee: have mercy upon me, and hear me.

9 My heart hath talked of thee, Seek ye my face: thy face, Lord, will I seek.

10 O hide not thou thy face from me: nor cast thy servant away in displeasure.

11 Thou hast been my succour: leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

12 When my father and my mother forsake me: the Lord taketh me up.

13 Teach me thy way, O Lord: and lead me in the right way, because of mine enemies.

14 Deliver me not over into the will of mine adversaries: for there are false witnesses risen up against me, and such as speak wrong.

15 I should utterly have fainted: but that I believe verily to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

16 O tarry thou the Lord's leisure: be strong, and he shall comfort thine heart; and put thou thy trust in the Lord.

Ver. 1. *my light,*] The guide of my way, and the joy of my heart.

Ver. 2. *to eat up my flesh:*] To devour me, as wild

beasts do their prey.—*they stumbled and fell.*] So strong was the power of God on my behalf. When the enemies of Christ were about to take Him, "they went backward, and fell to the ground." *John* xviii. 6.

Ver. 3. *though an host*] A whole army.—*in him.*] The Lord.

Ver. 4. *One thing, &c.*] Observe this: David desired to be delivered from his enemies, and to return to Sion, not for any earthly advantage, but for the worship of his God in the tabernacle; in or near which he hoped always to dwell.—*the fair beauty,*] The beautiful services of the Lord's house, which are an emblem and foretaste of the worship of heaven.

Ver. 5. *hide me, &c.*] When an offender fled into the tabernacle and took hold of the altar, he was reckoned safe: this is seen by Joab's conduct, 1 *Kings* ii. 28. It means, therefore, "God shall hide me safely."—*a rock of stone*] A strong place where I need not fear.

Ver. 7. *an oblation*] An offering.

Ver. 9. *my heart, &c.*] When I was meditating upon Thee, and held, as it were, a discourse with myself, then I thought I heard Thee say, "Seek ye My face;" and the answer of my soul was, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek;" that is, Thy presence and Thy favour.

Ver. 12. *my father and my mother*] My best of earthly friends.

Ver. 14. *false witnesses*] How true was this of the Son of David, Jesus Christ! *Matt.* xxvi. 59, 60.

Ver. 15. *have fainted:*] Have sunk under my burden, if it had not been for my strong hope and belief, that God would deliver me.—*the land of the living;*] My own land, where my life is safe. David might also be looking to the true land of the living, to eternal life in heaven.

Ver. 16. *tarry thou*] David may either be speaking to his own soul, or to some of his companions, who were almost in despair. And he speaks to every one in trouble; "wait thou the Lord's time:" He who alone can save thee, knows best when and how to save thee. *Isaiah* xxv. 9. *Heb.* x. 36, 37.

Jehovah is the light of the world, and especially of all His faithful people: He teaches, He guides, He supports and comforts them: and thus said Jesus, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." *John* viii. 12. In this light alone be our hope and trust: He will guide every believer into the knowledge of his truth, and the comforts of his salvation: He will uphold and protect their souls; and their lives also, as long as that is good for them: in his presence they will be as safe as if they were entirely hidden in a secret place. How merciful is God! inviting all to come to Him: "Seek ye my face:" "Come unto me," says our Lord, "all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." *Matt.* xi. 28. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." *John* vi. 68. While the Lord is our friend, we need not fear what man can do unto us: even the fatherless and motherless child has no reason to fear; no, nor the lonely, weeping widow. The Lord "is a Father of the fatherless, and defendeth the cause of the widows." *Psalm* lxviii. 5. "Believe in Him, hope in Him, depend upon Him: make His service your delight: and He will show you His goodness even upon earth. But how truly may we say, that earth is the land of the dying; heaven is "the land of the living!" Set thy heart on that; and there thou shalt see and know more of the goodness of the Lord, "even face to face," for ever and ever.

QUESTIONS.

What does David say that the Lord was to him?—How was He his light?—To eat up my flesh?—The fair beauty of the Lord?—Hide me in His tabernacle?—Oblation?—Explain verse 9.—Against whom did false witnesses rise?—What kept David from fainting?—What is meant by tarrying the Lord's leisure?—And what by the land of the living?

PSALM XXVIII.

The subject of this Psalm is similar to that of the Twenty-seventh; it consists of earnest prayer and praise.

1 Unto thee will I cry, O Lord, my strength: think no scorn of me, lest, if thou make as though thou hearest not, I become like them that go down into the pit.

2 Hear the voice of my humble petitions, when I cry unto thee: when I hold up my hands towards the mercy-seat of thy holy temple.

3 O pluck me not away, neither destroy me with the ungodly and wicked doers: which speak friendly to their neighbours, but imagine mischief in their hearts.

4 Reward them according to their deeds: and according to the wickedness of their own inventions.

5 Recompense them after the work of their hands: pay them that they have deserved.

6 For they regard not in their minds the works of the Lord, nor the operations of his hands: therefore shall he break them down, and not build them up.

7 Praised be the Lord: for he hath heard the voice of my humble petitions.

8 The Lord is my strength, and my shield; my heart hath trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart danceth for joy, and in my song will I praise him.

9 The Lord is my strength: and he is the wholesome defence of his anointed.

10 O save thy people, and give thy blessing unto thine inheritance: feed them, and set them up for ever.

Ver. 1. *think no scorn*] Despise me not, refuse not to hear me, and answer my prayer.—*into the pit,*] To the grave.

Ver. 2. *the mercy-seat*] God gave His answers from the mercy-seat of the ark. *Exod.* xxv. 21, 22. *Numb.* vii. 89.

Ver. 4. *their own inventions.*] Their own plottings and wicked endeavours.

Ver. 5. *recompense them*] How often has God said He will do this! "Be sure your sin will find you out." *Numb.* xxxii. 23.

Ver. 6. *the operations*] The working.

Ver. 8. *my shield;*] *Psalm* v. 13.

Ver. 9. *wholesome defence*] Saving strength. *Bib. Vers.*

Ver. 10. *feed them*] Even with the bread that nourisheth unto eternal life. *John* vi.

David's prayer, in the first six verses, is "the prayer of faith," and holy trust in God: O my soul, take him for thy pattern in all thy endurings; and then thou shalt find reason, as he does in verse 7, to pass quickly and suddenly from prayer

to praise. The scene often changes almost in an instant: from behind the darkest cloud the sun shines out in an unexpected moment, and sheds abroad the light of life: let it awaken in the heart a strain of thanksgiving: "Praised be the Lord." But we must pray in trouble, if we would give thanks for deliverance. O Lord, "save thy people, and give thy blessing unto thine inheritance: feed them, and set them up for ever." "Save us, O Lord Jesu, from our sins; bless us, O thou Son of Abraham, with the blessing of righteousness; feed us, O thou good Shepherd of the sheep; and lift us up for ever from the dust, O thou who art the resurrection and the life."

QUESTIONS.

Think no scorn of me?—Into the pit?—Where was the mercy-seat?—For what purpose was it ordained?—Show this from Scripture.—Of their own inventions?—Operation?—The Lord is my shield?—The wholesome defence?—Spiritual food?—The Psalm consists of two parts, what are they?

PSALM XXIX.

It is probable that this Psalm was composed after some very violent storm of thunder, lightning, and rain; by which, perhaps, the enemies of David had been dismayed and subdued: he therefore calls upon the mighty to submit to the Lord, and worship Him.

1 Bring unto the Lord, O ye mighty, bring young rams unto the Lord: ascribe unto the Lord worship and strength.

2 Give the Lord the honour due unto his Name: worship the Lord with holy worship.

3 It is the Lord that commandeth the waters: it is the glorious God that maketh the thunder.

4 It is the Lord that ruleth the sea; the voice of the Lord is mighty in operation: the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice.

5 The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedar trees: yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Libanus.

6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf: Libanus also, and Sirion, like a young unicorn.

7 The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire; the voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness: yea, the Lord

shaketh the wilderness of Cades.

8 The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to bring forth young, and discovereth the thick bushes: in his temple doth every man speak of his honour.

9 The Lord sitteth above the water-flood: and the Lord remaineth a king for ever.

10 The Lord shall give strength unto his people: the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace.

Ver. 1. *bring young rams*] To offer for sacrifice at the altar of the Lord.

Ver. 4. *the voice of the Lord*] The thunder. 2 *Sam.* xxii. 14. But David seems here to speak of the thunder and lightning taken together. It is the lightning which is "mighty in operation," breaking the cedars, &c.

Ver. 5. *of Libanus*] Libanus, or Lebanon, was a mountain famous for its strong and lofty cedars. 2 *Chron.* ii. 8.

Ver. 6. *Sirion,*] A mountain near Lebanon. These mountains having part of them shivered to pieces by the lightning, and cast to some distance, are described as skipping or leaping about like young animals.—*unicorn.*] See on *Psalm* xxii. 21.

Ver. 7. *the flames of fire;*] The flashes of lightning.—*of Cades.*] Or Kadesh, a wilderness; through part of which the Israelites passed in their way to Canaan. *Numb.* xiii. 26. Not only on the lofty and thickly-wooded mountains, but also in the low and barren wilderness, this power of God is displayed.

Ver. 8. *the hinds*] The animals also are affected by the storm, and cast their young through fear.—*discovereth, &c.*] Strips the forest-trees of their leaves and boughs, and lays them bare and open to view.—*in his temple*] While the other works of creation bear witness to God's power in the storm by its terrible effects, His pious worshippers are privileged to bear witness to it in the temple, by their songs of praise: there, unhurt and blessed, they magnify His glorious name.

Ver. 9. *above the water-flood:*] Above the clouds, directing the storm.

Ver. 10. *shall give strength*] This mighty Lord can use His power as He pleases; and He uses it in giving

strength to His people. The very storm which destroys His enemies, can minister safety to His chosen servants. *Exod.* ix. 22—26.

Bow down, ye mighty ones of earth, and own Jehovah's power: submit yourselves, and turn aside the wrath which ye are not able to withstand. Often, indeed, do we see the stoutest heart tremble at the voice of the Lord in the thunder; often does the lightning flash terror upon the soul that has been defying the majesty of Heaven: would to God it might always convince and convert! And if He be now so terrible, in thunder, and lightning, and earthquake; if these so awfully show the power of God and the weakness of man, what will He be to sinners in the day of His fierce anger, when the "powers of heaven shall be shaken;" when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, (when) the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up?" 2 *Pet.* iii. 10. O let us seek a refuge against that day, a refuge in every storm. Let us hear "the voice of the Lord" in His blessed word, promising mercy, and deliverance, and life: let us "seek, and we shall find" shelter in His ark of salvation: in that safe keeping we shall sing His glory after every storm, and even while the storm is raging. In the midst of all enemies and all troubles without, we shall have peace within, from "the Prince of Peace;" and He will give us at last the blessing of eternal peace, in that land of rest, where He "remaineth a King for ever."

QUESTIONS.

"Bring young rams," for what purpose?—Give what unto the Lord?—And how worship Him?—What do you mean by "the voice of the Lord?"—How is it described in verse 4?—What does it break?—What is Lebanon?—What Sirion?—A unicorn?—What does this voice shake?—Where and how do God's true worshippers bear witness to His power?—Where does the Lord sit?—What is meant by the water-flood?—What does the Lord remain?—What will He give to His people?—How must we seek refuge and safety in every trouble?—Where shall we be safe at the last?

THE SIXTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM XXX.

A thanksgiving for deliverance, either from a dangerous sickness, or from some terrible persecution. Some think it was composed when David took possession of his new house. 2 *Sam.* v. 11. *See the* Bible Version.

1 I will magnify thee, O Lord, for thou hast set me up : and not made my foes to triumph over me.

2 O Lord my God, I cried unto thee : and thou hast healed me.

3 Thou, Lord, hast brought my soul out of hell : thou hast kept my life from them that go down to the pit.

4 Sing praises unto the Lord, O ye saints of his : and give thanks unto him for a remembrance of his holiness.

5 For his wrath endureth but the twinkling of an eye, and in his pleasure is life : heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

6 And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be removed : thou, Lord, of thy goodness hast made my hill so strong.

7 Thou didst turn thy face from me : and I was troubled.

8 Then cried I unto thee, O Lord : and gat me to my Lord right humbly.

9 What profit is there in my blood : when I go down to the pit?

10 Shall the dust give thanks unto thee : or shall it declare thy truth?

11 Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me : Lord, be thou my helper.

12 Thou hast turned my heaviness into joy : thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.

13 Therefore shall every good man sing of thy praise without ceasing : O my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

Ver. 1.] In this, and many other verses of the Psalm, David may be understood, not only as speaking for himself, but also as speaking the language of the Messiah, Christ Jesus, to whom the expressions are still more

suited. He truly was "set up," and His foes were not suffered "to triumph over" Him.

Ver. 3. *brought my soul, &c.*] Delivered me from the grave. But the words more properly describe the resurrection of Jesus. See on *Psalm* xvi. 11.—*from them that go down*] I am not numbered with them. The meaning is, "Thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit," or grave. *Bib. Vers.*

Ver. 4. *his holiness.*] His excellency, shown in His mercy and pity.

Ver. 5. *but the twinkling, &c.*] But a moment. *Bib. Vers.* See 1 Cor. xv. 52.—*in his pleasure*] In His being pleased, in His favour. This verse presents a most beautiful and affecting image of the sufferings and exaltation of Christ; of the sorrows and joys of a penitent; of the miseries of time, and the glories of eternity; of the night of death, and the morning of the resurrection.

Ver. 6. *made my hill, &c.*] I thought that the hill of Sion, on which I dwelt, was so strong a place, that I was in no danger from my enemies. David, we see, though acknowledging the Lord's goodness in making him prosperous, grew confident and careless; and so was betrayed to sin: and then, it appears, from *ver.* 7, God turned His face from him and withdrew His favour.

Ver. 8. *Then cried I*] The rod of correction had its proper effect; it brought him to prayer and humbled him.

Ver. 9. *What profit*] I said in my distress, and in the sickness thereby brought upon me, Of what use can I be, if I die, to the cause and Church of God? How can I glorify His name? By this David meant to show fully he was resolved to serve the Lord, in case his life was spared; and he pleaded this resolution before God, as the ground of mercy, and the only reason why he wished to live: God heard the prayer, *ver.* 12, and David kept his resolution and promise.

Ver. 12. *my sackcloth,*] My garment of mourning;—*and girded me, &c.*] Made me to gird myself with garments of joy. This verse was true also of Christ, and will be true of every penitent disciple.

We should frequently call to mind the many troubles and dangers from which we have been "lifted up," and ever remember them with gratitude and love to our heavenly Father, who alone hath preserved us and kept us alive. And if He has restored us in answer to our prayers, and if He gives us blessings, let us never on that account presume, never grow careless, never be misled or dazzled by any worldly thing, never drawn aside from our humble reliance upon God. For if we forget *Him*, He will "turn His face from *us*;" and bring us, by new and heavier corrections, to feel our own weakness, and our dependence upon his goodness and power. But let not the believer, when thus corrected, be cast down to despair; it is the hand of the Father, chastising in love; the punishment, though severe, will be short; a sorrowful night, a happy morning. "For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." *Isaiah* liv. 7, 8. The true penitent, the "meek and lowly in heart," shall soon exchange his sackcloth for the garments of salvation: and, on the latter day, he shall, through the Redeemer's merits, put off the vileness of the grave, and rise with a "glorious body." *Phil.* iii. 21.

QUESTIONS.

Why did David magnify God?—Explain verse 3.—His wrath endureth but what?—What do you mean by "the twinkling of an eye?"—Where else do we find these words?—What did David say in his prosperity?—And what did God do on account of this presumption?—And how did David afterwards behave?—How did he plead with God to spare him?—What did he mean by this pleading?—Put off my sackcloth?—Girded me with gladness?—What should we do when afflicted and corrected?

PSALM XXXI.

This Psalm consists of prayers to God, of thanks for His mercy in many trials, and of purposes to trust and rejoice in Him. It may allude to David's great difficulties and dangers in the city of Keilah, when he fled to a strong hold in the mountains. 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 7—29. *We shall find, however, many passages in the Psalm which belong rather to the Son of David.*

1 In thee, O Lord, have I put my trust : let me never be put to confusion, deliver me in thy righteousness.

2 Bow down thine ear to me : make haste to deliver me.

3 And be thou my strong rock, and house of defence : that thou mayest save me.

4 For thou art my strong rock, and my castle : be thou also my guide, and lead me for thy Name's sake.

5 Draw me out of the net that they have laid privily for me : for thou art my strength.

6 Into thy hands I commend my spirit : for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth.

7 I have hated them that hold of superstitious vanities : and my trust hath been in the Lord.

8 I will be glad, and rejoice in thy mercy : for thou hast considered my trouble, and hast known my soul in adversities.

9 Thou hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy : but hast set my feet in a large room.

10 Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble : and mine eye is consumed for very heaviness; yea, my soul and my body.

11 For my life is waxen old with heaviness : and my years with mourning.

12 My strength faileth me, because of mine iniquity : and my bones are consumed.

13 I became a reproof among all mine enemies, but especially among my neighbours : and they of mine acquaintance were afraid of me; and they that did see me without conveyed themselves from me.

14 I am clean forgotten, as a dead man out of mind : I am become like a broken vessel.

15 For I have heard the blasphemy of the multitude : and fear is on every side, while they conspire together against me, and take their counsel to take away my life.

16 But my hope hath been in thee, O Lord : I have said, Thou art my God.

17 My time is in thy hand; deliver me from the hand of mine enemies : and from them that persecute me.

18 Show thy servant the light of thy countenance : and save me for thy mercy's sake.

19 Let me not be confounded, O Lord, for I have called upon thee : let the ungodly be put to confusion, and be put to silence in the grave.

20 Let the lying lips be put to silence : which cruelly, disdainfully, and despitefully speak against the righteous.

21 O how plentiful is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee : and that thou hast prepared for them that put their trust in thee, even before the sons of men!

22 Thou shalt hide them privily by thine own presence from the provoking of all men : thou shalt keep them secretly in thy tabernacle from the strife of tongues.

23 Thanks be to the Lord : for he hath shown me marvellous great kindness in a strong city.

24 And when I made haste, I said : I am cast out of the sight of thine eyes.

25 Nevertheless, thou heardest the voice of my prayer : when I cried unto thee.

26 O love the Lord, all ye his saints : for the Lord preserveth them that are faithful, and plenteously rewardeth the proud doer.

27 Be strong, and he shall establish your heart : all ye that put your trust in the Lord.

Ver. 1. *in thy righteousness.*] Make good Thy promised mercies. God is "faithful and just" in delivering those who trust in Him.

Ver. 5. *out of the net*] Out of the snare : thus did the Jews take counsel against Christ.

Ver. 6. *Into thy hands, &c.*] These words were uttered by our Lord upon the cross. *Luke* xxiii. 46.—*redeemed me,*] Set me free.

Ver. 7. *that hold of*] That regard.—*superstitious vanities :*] Lying vanities, the false gods of the heathen, which it is folly to worship.

Ver. 8. *hast known my soul*] Hast owned and succoured me.

Ver. 9. *hast set my feet, &c.*] Hast set me at liberty. *Psalm* iv. 1.

Ver. 10. *mine eye, &c.*] The outward expression of my grief of mind.

Ver. 11. *is waxen old*] I am become like an old man, feeble and spent.

Ver. 13. *a reproof*] A reproach : they call me by ill names. This verse, and the two following, very clearly apply to Jesus, who was reviled and despised by His own people ; who was deserted, when "all the disciples forsook Him and fled" for fear ; and against whose life His wicked enemies were always conspiring.

Ver. 16. *I have said, &c.*] I have determined and declared that I will look to Thee alone.

Ver. 17. *My time is, &c.*] Thou wilt order for me how long I shall live. Thus the enemies of Jesus could not touch Him till His time was come ; as He said to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power," &c. *John* xix. 11.

Ver. 20. *lying lips*] If they were liars who accused David of crime, how much more they who accused Christ, "the righteous one!"

Ver. 22. *in thy tabernacle*] They shall be as safe in Thy presence, as if they were shut up in the tabernacle.

Ver. 23. *in a strong city.*] Probably meaning Keilah, which was a fenced city, well guarded; and from which he was delivered. 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 7.

Ver. 24. *when I made haste,*] When I was hasty, and did not patiently consider, I gave up all for lost.

Ver. 27. *Be strong, &c.*] Be of good courage, and He will strengthen thine heart.

The righteous living amongst the wicked, must expect to be sorely tried and put to rebuke: and when they are so, let them remember David, "the man after God's own heart," and the treatment which he met with continually; let them "look unto Jesus," who was still more hated and afflicted than they can ever be. After the example of David, and still more after the example of Jesus, let them pray, and commit their cause to God. Our time is in His hand, and no enemy can cut us off, till the Lord sees it good for us, till our work be done. We are better guarded than in the strongest city; "we are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation." 1 *Pet.* i. 5. Never, therefore, let us give way to unbelief; never hastily conclude, in the hour of sorrow, that we are cut off from the favour and protection of the Lord. Let us think of the many mercies and deliverances which we have already received; let us think of "the sure word of promise," which never has failed, nor can fail, and let us say, "My hope hath been in Thee, O Lord; I have said, Thou art my God." Every day let us commend our spirit into His hands, for He hath redeemed us; let us go on in the way of duty, as His redeemed servants; and thus He will be with us even to the end; and when we breathe our last, we shall be enabled cheerfully to commend our spirit into the hands of the everlasting Saviour, who will "keep that which we have committed unto Him against that day." 2 *Tim.* i. 12.

QUESTIONS.

In what words did David resign himself to God?—Who else used those words, and when?—Superstitious vanities?—In a large room?—My life is waxen old?—I became a reproof?—My time is in thy hand?—Thou shalt keep them in thy tabernacle?—When I made haste?—What did David then say?—Be strong?—He shall establish thine heart?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM XXXII.

Here is set forth the blessedness of pardon, the way to obtain it, together with the nature and effects of true repentance. This is one of the penitential Psalms, and is used on Ash-Wednesday.

1 Blessed is he whose unrighteousness is forgiven : and whose sin is covered.

2 Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth no sin : and in whose spirit there is no guile.

3 For while I held my tongue : my bones consumed away through my daily complaining.

4 For thy hand is heavy upon me day and night : and my moisture is like the drought in summer.

5 I will acknowledge my sin unto thee : and mine unrighteousness have I not hid.

6 I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord : and so thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin.

7 For this shall every one that is godly make his prayer unto thee, in a time when thou mayest be found : but in the great water-floods they shall not come nigh him.

8 Thou art a place to hide me in, thou shalt preserve me from trouble : thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.

9 I will inform thee, and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go : and I will guide thee with mine eye.

10 Be ye not like to horse and mule, which have no understanding : whose mouths must be held with bit and bridle, lest they fall upon thee.

11 Great plagues remain for the ungodly : but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord, mercy embraceth him on every side.

12 Be glad, O ye righteous, and rejoice in the Lord : and be joyful, all ye that are true of heart.

Ver. 1. *whose sin is covered.*] So as not to appear against him ; not to be brought forward any more. Sin is the only cause of misery. When this is forgiven, there is no charge remaining against us ; God is then our friend, and in His favour is life and joy. St. Paul quotes the two first verses of this Psalm (*Rom.* iv. 7, 8,) to show that this blessedness is procured by the free mercy of God, through the merits of Jesus Christ. Man can do nothing to *deserve* pardon ; he must be made fit for it by the grace of God ; he

must repent and believe; but it is owing entirely to God's undeserved goodness that there is any means of pardon for sinful man. Happy are they who seek and find it: to them the blessing, to God the praise.

Ver. 2. *imputeth*] Reckoneth; to whose charge the Lord layeth no sin.—*no guile, &c.*] No deceit or hypocrisy. Here we have the state of heart, the character of the man who is forgiven: he must be sincere in his repentance of all sin; he must believe with all his soul; he must fully resolve to obey every commandment of God, without any exception, to the utmost of his power. There must be no habit of evil, which he is even desirous to keep; and no duty which he is not willing to perform.

Ver. 3. *while I held my tongue:*] Before I made confession, I was in a dreadful state of mind: now I am easy. He probably alludes to his crimes of adultery and murder. 2 *Sam.* xi.

Ver. 4. *my moisture, &c.*] I am dried up: the healthy juices of my body are gone, as the moisture goes from the parched land in summer: the summers in the land of Judea were very hot, and the herbs all withered away.

Ver. 5, 6. *I will acknowledge,—I will confess*] "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just (true to His promise) to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 *John* i. 9. When David had fully confessed his sin to Nathan, he said, "The Lord hath put away thy sin." 2 *Sam.* xii. 13. But it must be the confession of deep repentance.

Ver. 7. *shall not come nigh him.*] This may mean, either that the great floods (of trouble) shall not come near to hurt the godly man; or it may mean that they (the *ungodly*) who will not seek the Lord while He may be found, shall not be suffered to come near Him in the day of their great trouble and danger, when they would only be driven to Him through fear.

Ver. 8. *compass me about*] I shall be delivered so often, that my songs of praise shall seem as if they compassed, or surrounded me; they shall be so many.

Ver. 9. *I will inform thee,*] These are the words of David, in the name of God, addressed to every one who will regard Him.

Ver. 10. *whose mouths, &c.*] Who must be held and managed by force, or sharp usage. Come ye, and serve God willingly and freely.

All men would be happy; but most men miss the way to be so: they seek their happiness in the sinful world, with guilt lying upon their consciences, unrepented and unforgiven. But "there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." *Isaiah* lvii. 21. No peace while the burden of sin is resting upon the soul. Sometimes it drives people to despair: sometimes their torment of mind is so great, that they put themselves to death. How ought we to tremble at the consequences of sin; how anxious should we be to escape them! They alone are blessed, they alone are happy, whose sins are forgiven, through the mercy and merit of their great Redeemer; their change of heart and life gives them a lively hope, that they are partakers of this blessedness; they do believe and love, they do repent and obey; they do pray and strive "to be cleansed from all sin;" to be "Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile." *John* i. 47. And the joy of this change is unspeakable. O that all could be led to partake of it; that, instead of keeping their sins, like a smothered fire, in their bosom, they would spread them before the Lord, in repentance and faith, and have them forgiven! O that they would "seek the Lord, while He may be found;" "before the evil days come!"

QUESTIONS.

Who is blessed?—What do you mean by sin being *covered?*—Imputeth?—Through whom are sins forgiven?—No guile?—What sign have we that our sins are forgiven?—Like the drought?—What will God do, if we confess our sins?—Repeat the passage from St. John.—The great water-floods?—Not like to horse and mule, how so?—What remain for the ungodly?—What will be to those who put their trust in the Lord?

PSALM XXXIII.

The righteous are called upon to rejoice in God, and to praise Him for His perfections, as shown in His word and works, especially to rejoice in His goodness, as shown in His protection of His people.

1 Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for it becometh well the just to be thankful.

2 Praise the Lord with harp: sing praises unto him with the lute, and instrument of ten strings.

3 Sing unto the Lord a new song: sing praises lustily unto him with a good courage.

4 For the word of the Lord is true: and all his works are faithful.

5 He loveth righteousness and judgement: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

6 By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together, as it were upon an heap: and layeth up the deep as in a treasure-house.

8 Let all the earth fear the Lord: stand in awe of him, all ye that dwell in the world.

9 For he spake, and it was done: he commanded, and it stood fast.

10 The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: and maketh the devices of the people to be of none effect, and casteth out the counsels of princes.

11 The counsels of the Lord shall endure for ever: and the thoughts of his heart from generation to generation.

12 Blessed are the people, whose God is the Lord Jehovah: and blessed are the folk that he hath chosen to him to be his inheritance.

13 The Lord looked down from heaven, and beheld all the children of men: from the habitation of his dwelling he considereth all them that dwell on the earth.

14 He fashioneth all the hearts of them: and understandeth all their works.

15 There is no king that can be saved by the multitude of an host: neither is any mighty man delivered by much strength.

16 A horse is counted but a vain thing to save a man: neither shall he deliver any man by his great strength.

17 Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him: and upon them that put their trust in his mercy;

18 To deliver their soul from death: and to feed them in the time of dearth.

19 Our soul hath patiently tarried for the Lord: for he is our help, and our shield.

20 For our heart shall rejoice in him: because we have hoped in his holy Name.

21 Let thy merciful kindness, O Lord, be upon us: like as we do put our trust in thee.

Ver. 1. *the just*] The upright, the obedient servants of God.

Ver. 3. *lustily*] Earnestly, loudly.

Ver. 6, *by the breath, &c.*] "He commanded, and they were created." *Psalm* cxlviii. 5.

Ver. 7. *He gathereth the waters*] *Gen.* i. 9, 10. *Job* xxxviii. 8—11.

Ver. 10. *to nought:*] To nothing.—*and maketh the devices*] Maketh the thoughts and plans of the people who oppose Him to end in nothing.

Ver. 14. *He fashioneth, &c.*] The Lord formed the souls of men, as well as their bodies; and therefore must see into their very hearts, and be perfectly acquainted with every one of their thoughts; and what He sees He marks for judgment.

Ver. 18. *in the time of dearth,*] Of want and scarcity.

Ver. 19. *our shield.*] See on *Psalm* v. 13.

The righteous servants of God are deeply sensible of His mercy and favour: He gives them their daily bread, and all their earthly blessings: He supplies their souls with heavenly strength and comfort, by the grace of His Holy Spirit: they are altogether happy in Him. And "who hath made them to differ" from the rest of mankind? What hath raised them above the world? Who, but their gracious God? showing them the knowledge of His ways, even the way of salvation, and leading them to walk therein. Truly then, it "becometh them well to be thankful." He, who made the world and all that is therein, continually watches for the good of them that fear Him. All the power of the mightiest kings and the greatest armies is nothing when set against God: He who giveth bounds to the sea, and keeps its proud waves in their place, giveth bounds also to the mighty ones of the earth, and keeps them according to His will. Be not afraid: "who is he that shall harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" 1 *Pet.* iii. 13. The Lord will preserve your lives, and supply your earthly wants, as far as it is good for you; and He will feed your souls, and preserve you from eternal death. Surely, His "merciful kindness will be upon you, according as you put your trust in Him."

QUESTIONS.

What does it become the just to be?—Who are the just?—Why should they be thankful?—Lustily?—By the breath of His mouth?—To nought?—To be of none effect?—What people are blessed?—What does the Lord fashion?—How fashioneth the heart?—Upon whom is the eye of the Lord?—In the time of dearth?—Who are then fed?

PSALM XXXIV.

David praises God, and exhorts others, from his own experience, to bless and trust in Him. He then teaches the fear of the Lord, and compares the state of the righteous with that of the wicked.

1 I will alway give thanks unto the Lord : his praise shall ever be in my mouth.

2 My soul shall make her boast in the Lord : the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.

3 O praise the Lord with me : and let us magnify his Name together.

4 I sought the Lord, and he heard me : yea, he delivered me out of all my fear.

5 They had an eye unto him, and were lightened : and their faces were not ashamed.

6 Lo, the poor crieth, and the Lord heareth him : yea, and saveth him out of all his troubles.

7 The angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that fear him : and delivereth them.

8 O taste, and see, how gracious the Lord is : blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

9 O fear the Lord, ye that are his saints : for they that fear him lack nothing.

10 The lions do lack, and suffer hunger : but they who seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good.

11 Come, ye children, and hearken unto me : I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

12 What man is he that lusteth to live : and would fain see good days?

13 Keep thy tongue from evil : and thy lips, that they speak no guile.

14 Eschew evil, and do good : seek peace, and ensue it.

15 The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous : and his ears are open unto their prayers.

16 The countenance of the Lord is against them that do evil : to root out the remembrance of them from the earth.

17 The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them : and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

18 The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart : and will save such as be of an humble spirit.

19 Great are the troubles of the righteous : but the Lord delivereth him out of all.

20 He keepeth all his bones : so that not one of them is broken.

21 But misfortune shall slay the ungodly : and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.

22 The Lord delivereth the souls of his servants : and all they that put their trust in him shall not be destitute.

Ver. 2. *The humble, &c.*] Other humble and pious people shall hear of my deliverance, and thus take comfort to themselves.

Ver. 5. *They had an eye unto him,*] They looked unto Him. David declares the mercy of God to all the righteous, as well as to himself.—*lightened:*] Were comforted.

Ver. 6. *the poor*] The weak and afflicted man; meaning himself: probably alluding also to Him, who "though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor." 2 *Cor.* viii. 9. Though He was powerful and happy in heavenly glory, yet He became weak as man, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." *Isa.* liii. 3.

Ver. 7. *The angel*] The heavenly messengers whom Jehovah sends to protect His faithful servants, are called angels: the meaning of the word angel is, a person sent. Thus St. Paul speaks of the angels, "as ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." *Heb.* i. 14. The Lord Himself also is called by this name, *Gen.* xxxi. 11. 13. 24, and xlviii. 16. *Exod.* iii. 2. 4, that is, the Lord Christ, who appeared, before He took upon Him our flesh, to holy men of old, in the form of an angel; and was all along the Head of the Church of Israel. The prophet Malachi calls Him "the messenger (or angel) of the covenant." *Mal.* iii. 1. And David may especially allude to Him in this verse. Thus also says St. Paul, "God *sent forth* His Son." *Gal.* iv. 4.

Ver. 8. *O taste, and see,*] Know it by experience and enjoyment; the goodness of God is as plainly to be perceived by the mind, as honey by the taste, and light by the eyes.

Ver. 9. *lack nothing.*] Want nothing.

Ver. 11. *Ye children,*] Ye that are willing to learn as children.

Ver. 12. *that lusteth, &c.*] Desirous to live long.—*fain see*] Would wish to see.

Ver. 13. *Keep thy tongue, &c.*] *James* iii. 13—18.

Ver. 14. *Eschew*] Avoid, depart from. — *ensue*] Follow.

Ver. 15. *The eyes, &c.*] Compare 1 *Pet.* iii. 12.

Ver. 18. *contrite*] Broken under a sense of sin and a load of affliction. *Matt.* v. 3.

Ver. 19. *Great are the troubles*] Compare *John* xvi. 33.

Ver. 20. *keepeth all his bones:*] Preserveth his body from evil. *Matt.* x. 29—31. But these words are also a

prophecy of Christ, foretelling that "not a bone of Him should be broken on the cross." *John* xix. 31—36.

Ver. 21. *misfortune*] Evil; the evil of punishment.—*desolate.*] Destroyed, or be accounted guilty. (See margin of Bible.)

Ver. 22. *Not be destitute.*] Not forsaken, not left in want.

It is our duty to "bless the Lord at all times;" even in sickness and pain, in trouble and danger, for He is merciful in all; much more should we bless Him for our recovery; in order that we may thus lead others to join in our praises, and to trust in Him too. They must be safe and happy, "who fear the Lord:" His eyes are always over them; He sends His holy angels to "tarry round about them," to be ministers of good to their bodies and their souls; yea, the great Angel of the covenant, the Lord Jesus their Saviour, is "with them always," to protect and preserve them. O that all could be brought to make trial of His love!—they would soon be convinced of the happiness of serving Him. Those angry feelings and angry words, those unrighteous and violent deeds, which bring so much misery, would be put away; and peace would reign in the bosom. God dwelleth with the meek and humble; and where He dwelleth, there must be peace and joy. "Thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit; to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." *Isaiah* lvii. 15. Enable us, O Lord, to "walk by faith, and not by sight," until we come to Thy heavenly kingdom; where, with all Thy saints, "made perfect through sufferings," and with all Thy good angels that have loved and guarded us, we may magnify Thy name for evermore.

QUESTIONS.

They had an eye unto Him?—The poor?—What is an angel?—What may we understand by "the angel of the Lord?"—How can we taste that the Lord is gracious?—What do the lions?—"But they," &c.?—Ye children?—What will they be taught?—Lusteth to live?—Would fain?—How shall we see good days?—Eschew?—Ensue?—To whom is the Lord nigh?—What is contrite?—Explain verse 20.—And show how it applies to Christ.—Misfortune?—Desolate?—Destitute?

THE SEVENTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM XXXV.

David prays God to defeat his enemies, or rather foretels *that they* shall be *defeated. He gives an account of their wicked dealings, and appeals to God for his innocence. Much of this Psalm applies to Christ.*

1 Plead thou my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me: and fight thou against them that fight against me.

2 Lay hand upon the shield and buckler: and stand up to help me.

3 Bring forth the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.

4 Let them be confounded, and put to shame, that seek after my soul: let them be turned back, and brought to confusion, that imagine mischief for me.

5 Let them be as the dust before the wind: and the angel of the Lord scattering them.

6 Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the Lord persecute them.

7 For they have privily laid their net to destroy me without a cause: yea, even without a cause have they made a pit for my soul.

8 Let a sudden destruction come upon him unawares, and his net, that he hath laid privily, catch himself: that he may fall into his own mischief.

9 And, my soul, be joyful in the Lord: it shall rejoice in his salvation.

10 All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, who deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him: yea, the poor, and him that is in misery, from him that spoileth him?

11 False witnesses did rise up: they laid to my charge things that I knew not.

12 They rewarded me evil for good: to the great discomfort of my soul.

13 Nevertheless, when they were sick, I put on sackcloth, and humbled my soul with fasting: and my prayer shall turn into mine own bosom.

14 I behaved myself as though it had been my friend, or my brother: I went heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.

15 But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: yea, the very abjects came together against me unawares, making mouths at me, and ceased not.

16 With the flatterers were busy mockers: who gnashed upon me with their teeth.

17 Lord, how long wilt thou look upon this : O deliver my soul from the calamities which they bring on me, and my darling from the lions.

18 So will I give thee thanks in the great congregation : I will praise thee among much people.

19 O let not them that are mine enemies triumph over me ungodly : neither let them wink with their eyes that hate me without a cause.

20 And why? their communing is not for peace : but they imagine deceitful words against them that are quiet in the land.

21 They gaped upon me with their mouths, and said : Fie on thee, fie on thee, we saw it with our eyes.

22 This thou hast seen, O Lord : hold not thy tongue then, go not far from me, O Lord.

23 Awake and stand up to judge my quarrel : avenge thou my cause, my God, and my Lord.

24 Judge me, O Lord my God, according to thy righteousness : and let them not triumph over me.

25 Let them not say in their hearts, There, there, so would we have it : neither let them say, We have devoured him.

26 Let them be put to confusion and shame together, that rejoice at my trouble : let them be clothed with rebuke and dishonour that boast themselves against me.

27 Let them be glad and rejoice, that favour my righteous dealing : yea, let them say alway, Blessed be the Lord, who hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

28 And as for my tongue, it shall be talking of thy righteousness : and of thy praise all the day long.

Ver. 1. *Plead thou my cause,*] Defend me, for I cannot defend myself.—*and fight*] David calls upon God as "a man of war." *Exod.* xv. 3.

Ver. 4. *Let them, &c.*] The proper sense is, "they shall be confounded, &c.; they shall be turned back," &c., and thus in ver. 4. 6. 8. 26. It is a prophecy foreshowing the destruction of the wicked, or a solemn denunciation of God's certain judgments against them.

Ver. 6. *the angel*] See on *Psalm* xxxiv. 7. Angels are employed as the ministers of vengeance, as well as mercy. 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 16. 2 *Kings* xix. 35.

Ver. 7, 8. *laid privily,*] See on *Psalm* ix. 15.

Ver. 9. *And, my soul,*] And thou, O my soul.

Ver. 10. *All my bones*] My body shall be refreshed by the gladness of my heart, it also shall bear witness to the power and mercy of the Lord.—*the poor,*] See on *Psalm*

xxxiv. 6.—*that spoileth him?*] That would ruin and destroy him.

Ver. 11. *False witnesses*] See on *Psalm* xxvii. 14.

Ver. 12. *evil for good:*] If this were true of David, how much more so of Christ, "who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil!" *Acts* x. 38.—*to the great discomfort, &c.*] Even seeking to take away my life.

Ver. 13. *and humbled, &c.*] Mourning for their sins, if so be that God might have mercy on them. Thus Jesus fasted, *Matt.* iv. 1, 2; and wept over Jerusalem, *Luke* xix. 41, 42; and prayed for His murderers, *Luke* xxiii. 34.—*sackcloth,*] See on *Psalm* xxx. 12.—*my prayer, &c.*] It was a prayer for good to them; and though it does not answer its purpose, it shall bring good to me; shall bring, as it were, gifts into my bosom. In those days, the garment fell over the bosom in a large hollow fold, into which they used to put what was given them. Thus *Luke* vi. 38, "shall men give into your bosom." See also *Isa.* lxv. 6.

Ver. 15. *the very abjects*] The lowest of the violent people; thus was Christ insulted and reviled, yea, even by the malefactor on the cross. *Matt.* xxvi. 67; xxvii. 27—31. 39—44.

Ver. 16. *gnashed*] After the manner of wild beasts. See *Psalm* xxii. 13. 21.

Ver. 17. *my darling from the lions.*] See on *Psalm* xxii. 20, 21.

Ver. 18.] See on *Psalm* xxii. 22. 25.

Ver. 19. *wink with, &c.*] Make signs to one another, by winking, as if they were in league to take and destroy me.

Ver. 20. *their communing*] Their taking counsel together. —*them that are quiet*] David made no disturbance against Saul: Christ did not seek to be an earthly king; the early Christians never meddled with the government; yet they were all persecuted, and accused before rulers, and punished as rebels. But it is better to "suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing." 1 *Pet.* iii. 16, 17.

Ver. 21. *we saw it*] Declaring that they saw me do what I never did.

Ver. 22. *hold not thy tongue*] Be not silent, "plead Thou my cause."

Ver. 25. *Let them not*] Let them not say, "It is as we desired, we have our way."

Ver. 28. *be talking*] So shall it be seen that my heart is sensible of Thy goodness.

The faithful servant is admitted into a covenant of friendship with his God: and they who strive with him, fight against the Almighty; whose presence and assistance will be a greater defence to His people, than the most powerful hosts of armed men. If He say to each of our souls, "I am thy salvation," we have nothing to fear. We must not desire the ruin or the injury of any enemies; we must desire their good, and pray for their forgiveness and conversion; according to the example of our blessed Lord upon the cross, and according to His holy commandment: "I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." *Matt.* v. 44. But still we must feel assured, that God will show forth His truth in the punishment of all who rebel against Him, and will not repent. He punished the wicked enemies of David, and the wicked enemies of Christ, because they were rebelling against the God of Heaven; and none who so rebel can ever escape. However we may be hated, whatever we may suffer, let us take care not to deserve it; let us bring no trouble upon our heads by our own sin and folly; let us "be quiet in the land," and attend to our duty, with meekness and patience: let us endeavour, as St. Paul did, "to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men." *Acts* xxiv. 16. Thus we may leave our cause with the Lord, and He will "give us the victory," and we shall "be glad and rejoice," here and for ever.

QUESTIONS.

How does David call upon God in the beginning of this Psalm?—Let them be, &c. verse 4, 5, 6?—Laid their net?—All my bones say?—The poor?—That spoileth him?—To the great discomfort of my soul?—I put on sackcloth?—With fasting?—Who else did so?—Into mine own bosom?—What does it mean?—Whence is the figure taken?—The very abjects?—How was this fulfilled in Christ?—My darling from the lions?—Neither let them wink with their eyes?—Their communing?—We saw it with our eyes?—Hold not Thy tongue?—What will God do to all His enemies?—What should we do for our enemies?—What will God then do for us?

PSALM XXXVI.

David describes the bad principles and practices of wicked men, and is led by them to reflect on the mercy, the truth, and the justice of God.

1 My heart showeth me the wickedness of the ungodly : that there is no fear of God before his eyes.

2 For he flattereth himself in his own sight : until his abominable sin be found out.

3 The words of his mouth are unrighteous, and full of deceit : he hath left off to behave himself wisely, and to do good.

4 He imagineth mischief upon his bed, and hath set himself in no good way : neither doth he abhor any thing that is evil.

5 Thy mercy, O Lord, reacheth unto the heavens : and thy faithfulness unto the clouds.

6 Thy righteousness standeth like the strong mountains : thy judgements are like the great deep.

7 Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast; how excellent is thy mercy, O God : and the children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

8 They shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of thy house : and thou shalt give them drink of thy pleasures, as out of the river.

9 For with thee is the well of life : and in thy light shall we see light.

10 O continue forth thy loving kindness unto them that know thee : and thy righteousness unto them that are true of heart.

11 O let not the foot of pride come against me : and let not the hand of the ungodly cast me down.

12 There are they fallen, all that work wickedness : they are cast down, and shall not be able to stand.

Ver. 1. *My heart, &c.*] I am convinced in my mind, of the reason why the ungodly man is so wicked ; it is because he does not fear God.

Ver. 2. *his abominable sin*] His hateful sin ; as long as his sin is not publicly known, he flatters himself that he is well thought of, and shall never be punished. David, in these four verses, probably alludes to Saul, who was become very wicked.

Ver. 4. *upon his bed,*] Wakeful to devise evil.—*abhor*] Hate.

Ver. 5. *reacheth unto the heavens :*] Is very large, has no bounds.

Ver. 6. *the strong mountains :*] It cannot be moved: it will last for ever.—*the great deep.*] We cannot reach to the bottom of them; they are too deep to be fathomed by our weak minds. *Job* xi. 7, &c.

Ver. 7. *Thou, Lord, &c.*] Thou preservest and providest for all Thy creatures.—*the shadow, &c.*] See on *Psalm* xvii. 8.

Ver. 8. *the plenteousness, &c.*] With the rich and abundant blessings they enjoy, as Thy children in Thy family.

Ver. 9. *the well of life :*] The well-spring or fountain of life. "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee," &c. *John* xvii. 3. "In Him was life: and the life was the light of men." *John* i. 4. God, like the sun, can only be seen by the light which He Himself sends forth.

Ver. 10. *that know*] That acknowledge and serve Thee. See on *Psalm* i. 7.

Ver. 11. *the foot of pride*] Of the proud man; let him not tread me under his foot.

All the wickedness of men comes from forgetfulness of God: their actions speak more plainly than their words: whenever a person lives in the habit of any sin, we may be sure that there is no true "fear of God before his eyes." He may flatter and deceive himself, and think that he is safe; but he is in the certain way to ruin, and he will go on from one wickedness to another, as Satan and his evil heart may lead him, a plague to himself and to all around. But let man be what he will, God is ever good and merciful; both His love and His judgments are past finding out. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." *Isa.* lv. 8, 9. In this unsearchable wisdom and mercy let our whole trust be placed: and thus the light of heaven will be ever shining upon our path; a fountain of comfort will be opened to us in every trouble; and at last we shall drink of the "river of the water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." *Rev.* xxii. 1.

QUESTIONS.

My heart showeth me?—What is the reason of the wickedness of ungodly men?—Why do they flatter themselves?—And how?—What are "the words of their mouth?"—What do

they not abhor?—How far does God's mercy reach?—What do you mean by this?—Explain verse 6.—Save both man and beast?—Under what do the children of men put their trust?—The well of life?—In thy light shall we see light?—The foot of pride?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM XXXVII.

This Psalm teaches the great duty of submission to the dealings of God, whatever they be. The joy of the wicked is short, and so are the trials of the righteous: in the end, the wicked will be cut off, and the righteous will be preserved and blessed for ever.

1 Fret not thyself because of the ungodly: neither be thou envious against the evil doers.

2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass: and be withered even as the green herb.

3 Put thou thy trust in the Lord, and be doing good: dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

4 Delight thou in the Lord: and he shall give thee thy heart's desire.

5 Commit thy way unto the Lord, and put thy trust in him: and he shall bring it to pass.

6 He shall make thy righteousness as clear as the light: and thy just dealing as the noon-day.

7 Hold thee still in the Lord, and abide patiently upon him: but grieve not thyself at him whose way doth prosper against the man that doeth after evil counsels.

8 Leave off from wrath, and let go displeasure: fret not thyself, else shalt thou be moved to do evil.

9 Wicked doers shall be rooted out: and they that patiently abide the Lord, those shall inherit the land.

10 Yet a little while and the ungodly shall be clean gone: thou shalt look after his place, and he shall be away.

11 But the meek-spirited shall possess the earth: and shall be refreshed in the multitude of peace.

12 The ungodly seeketh counsel against the just: and gnasheth upon him with his teeth.

13 The Lord shall laugh him to scorn: for he hath seen that his day is coming.

14 The ungodly have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow: to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as are of a right conversation.

15 Their sword shall go through their own heart : and their bow shall be broken.

16 A small thing that the righteous hath : is better than great riches of the ungodly.

17 For the arms of the ungodly shall be broken : and the Lord upholdeth the righteous.

18 The Lord knoweth the days of the godly : and their inheritance shall endure for ever.

19 They shall not be confounded in the perilous time : and in the days of dearth they shall have enough.

20 As for the ungodly, they shall perish; and the enemies of the Lord shall consume as the fat of lambs : yea, even as the smoke shall they consume away.

21 The ungodly borroweth and payeth not again : but the righteous is merciful and liberal.

22 Such as are blessed of God shall possess the land : and they that are cursed of him shall be rooted out.

23 The Lord ordereth a good man's going : and maketh his way acceptable to himself.

24 Though he fall, he shall not be cast away : for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.

25 I have been young, and now am old : and yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.

26 The righteous is ever merciful, and lendeth : and his seed is blessed.

27 Flee from evil, and do the thing that is good : and dwell for evermore.

28 For the Lord loveth the thing that is right : he forsaketh not his that be godly, but they are preserved for ever.

29 The unrighteous shall be punished : as for the seed of the ungodly, it shall be rooted out.

30 The righteous shall inherit the land : and dwell therein for ever.

31 The mouth of the righteous is exercised in wisdom : and his tongue will be talking of judgement.

32 The law of his God is in his heart : and his goings shall not slide.

33 The ungodly seeth the righteous : and seeketh occasion to slay him.

34 The Lord will not leave him in his hand : nor condemn him when he is judged.

35 Hope thou in the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall promote thee, that thou shalt possess the land : when the ungodly shall perish, thou shalt see it.

36 I myself have seen the ungodly in great power : and flourishing like a green bay-tree.

37 I went by, and lo, he was gone : I sought him, but his place could no where be found.

38 Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right : for that shall bring a man peace at the last.

39 As for the transgressors, they shall perish together : and the end of the ungodly is, they shall be rooted out at the last.

40 But the salvation of the righteous cometh of the Lord :

who is also their strength in the time of trouble.
41 And the Lord shall stand by them, and save them : he shall deliver them from the ungodly, and shall save them, because they put their trust in him.

Ver. 2. *as the green herb.*] See *Psalm* xc. 6.

Ver. 3. *dwell in the land,*] Dwell quietly and contentedly there. But in the *Bible Version* it is, "so shalt thou dwell in the land," i. e. as the reward for so doing.

Ver. 5. *bring it to pass.*] Shall fulfil thy desire, ver. 4.

Ver. 8. *let go displeasure :*] Put away thy vexation and complaining.

Ver. 9. *abide the Lord,*] Wait for the Lord.—*inherit the land.*] The promised land of Canaan, which was a pledge of all earthly blessings, as also of the inheritance of heaven to the patient and faithful servants of Jehovah.

Ver. 11. *the meek spirited*] The meek are they who are not soon made angry ; because the grace of God hath wrought in them a quiet spirit and temper. The Lord engaged to fight their battles for them, and to give them possession of the land. By the same figure blessings are promised to the Christian also, under the Gospel. *Matt.* v. 5 : in which passage our Lord quotes these words of David.

Ver. 12. *seeketh counsel*] Lays plots and snares. Thus did the Jews continually against the Just One, the blessed Jesus, who alone was perfectly just.

Ver. 13. *laugh him to scorn :*] See on *Psalm* ii. 4.—*his day,*] Of punishment.

Ver. 14. *a right conversation.*] In Scripture, conversation seldom means discourse : it commonly signifies the conduct and life. Thus *Phil.* i. 27 : "Let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ."

Ver. 15. *their sword—their bow*] Their weapons and means of mischief shall be turned against themselves. See on *Psalm* vii. 16.

Ver. 16. *a small thing, &c.*] Solomon, David's son, uttered many wise sentences like this. *Prov.* xv. 16, 17; xvi. 8 ; xvii. 1.

Ver. 17. *the arms*] The power.

Ver. 18. *their inheritance*] See on ver. 11.

Ver. 19. *the perilous time:*] In the time of danger and trouble.—*dearth*] Want, scarcity.

Ver. 20. *the fat of lambs:*] This was the first part to perish by the fire of the sacrifice.

Ver. 23. *acceptable*] Well-pleasing: he has the answer of a good conscience.

Ver. 25. *begging their bread.*] David does not say that the children of the righteous never were, or would be, brought to great want; but that he had never seen it: and no doubt it did very seldom happen in Canaan, where it pleased God to encourage His people to righteousness, by the promise of earthly blessings. And indeed it seldom happens any where, that a righteous family are suffered to starve.

Ver. 30. *inherit the land:—for ever.*] See on ver. 11.

Ver. 31. *exercised in wisdom:*] Speaketh wisdom. *Bib. Vers.*

Ver. 33. *seeth*] Beholds him with jealousy. Watcheth. *Bib. Vers.*

Ver. 36. *bay-tree.*] One of the most flourishing trees of that country; a native tree.

It is of vast importance to us, thoroughly to consider the present and future condition both of the righteous and the wicked; that we may know what to choose, and what to expect. The wicked are often suffered to prosper for a little while; yet it is but a little while; their prosperity is like the flourishing of the grass, and the flower, and the tree: it comes to an end very soon. Shortly they will no more be found upon the earth; into heaven they cannot enter; hell alone remains for them, where they must suffer the righteous vengeance of an offended God. And even here, indeed, their furious passions and their hateful vices will bring them much uneasiness and suffering, a sad foretaste of future misery. We need not, therefore, envy them their short pleasures: we need not complain. God, we may be sure, is dealing righteously: preparing punishment for His enemies, happiness for His people. Look beyond to-day; look to the end; and all will be right. The good man may have many trials; but the Lord will support him; will make him happier even upon earth, than the most prosperous sinner, and will give him "peace at the last."—"Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 *Tim.* iv. 8.

QUESTIONS.

Fret not thyself, &c., why?—Who are the meek-spirited?—What shall they do?—What do you mean by "possessing the earth?"—Explain verses 14, 15.—The arms of the ungodly broken?—The perilous time?—Days of dearth?—Consume as the fat of lambs?—What is meant by the mouth being exercised in wisdom?—What is the end of the wicked?—What of the righteous?

THE EIGHTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM XXXVIII.

David, when he wrote this Psalm, was in some great affliction of body or mind, occasioned by his sin; and he prays that the burthen of God's wrath may be removed. It is the third penitential Psalm, used on Ash Wednesday.

1 Put me not to rebuke, O Lord, in thine anger: neither chasten me in thy heavy displeasure.

2 For thine arrows stick fast in me: and thy hand presseth me sore.

3 There is no health in my flesh, because of thy displeasure: neither is there any rest in my bones, by reason of my sin.

4 For my wickednesses are gone over my head: and are like a sore burden, too heavy for me to bear.

5 My wounds stink, and are corrupt: through my foolishness.

6 I am brought into so great trouble and misery: that I go mourning all the day long.

7 For my loins are filled with a sore disease: and there is no whole part in my body.

8 I am feeble, and sore smitten: I have roared for the very disquietness of my heart.

9 Lord, thou knowest all my desire: and my groaning is not hid from thee.

10 My heart panteth, my strength hath failed me: and the sight of mine eyes is gone from me.

11 My lovers and my neighbours did stand looking upon my trouble: and my kinsmen stood afar off.

12 They also that sought after my life laid snares for me: and they that went about to do me evil, talked of wickedness, and imagined deceit all the day long.

13 As for me, I was like a deaf man and heard not: and as one that is dumb, who doth not open his mouth.

14 I became even as a man

that heareth not : and in whose mouth are no reproofs.

15 For in thee, O Lord, have I put my trust : thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God.

16 I have required that they, even mine enemies, should not triumph over me : for when my foot slipped, they rejoiced greatly against me.

17 And I, truly, am set in the plague : and my heaviness is ever in my sight.

18 For I will confess my wickedness : and be sorry for my sin.

19 But mine enemies live, and are mighty : and they that hate me wrongfully are many in number.

20 They also that reward evil for good are against me : because I follow the thing that good is.

21 Forsake me not, O Lord my God : be not thou far from me.

22 Haste thee to help me : O Lord God of my salvation.

Ver. 2. *thine arrows*] David compares his sharp anguish to the pains of many arrows shot into the flesh; and as God sent these pains for his correction, they are called God's arrows.

Ver. 3. *in my flesh,—in my bones,*] Perhaps the distress of the soul may be described under the figure of bodily disease: this appears still more likely from ver. 5; it was his foolishness, his grievous sin, that brought this suffering upon him.

Ver. 4. *gone over my head :*] My sins have brought so many evils upon me, that they overwhelm me, like a flood.

Ver. 11, 12.] Truly do these two verses describe the conduct both of the friends and enemies of the Lord Jesus. *Matt.* xxvi. 56. *Luke* xx. 19, 20. *Luke* xxiii. 49. See also *Job* xix. 13—17.

Ver. 13, 14, 15.] Read these three verses, and then read St. Peter's description of our Lord, 1 *Pet.* ii. 22, 23: the agreement is wonderful.

Ver. 17. *set in the plague :*] In the way of temptation and of falling. "I am ready to halt." *Bible Trans.*

"A wounded spirit who can bear?" *Prov.* xviii. 14. No pain is so sharp, no misery is so great, as that which comes from a deep sense of sin. God is angry, the soul is in danger, the door of mercy seems to be shut, the fear is tormenting. And the Lord often uses these afflictions and terrors, as a rod to chastise His offending servants, and to bring them back from the way

of transgression. Whenever we feel uneasy and unhappy after sin, let us be sure to refer it to the Lord's displeasure: God is offended, and He lays His heavy hand upon us, to make us sensible of our ungrateful conduct, and of the evil we are bringing upon our souls. Then, let us pray for the spirit of true repentance and faith; let us "confess our wickedness, and be sorry for our sin:" let us cast ourselves upon the Lord's mercy, in the name of our Great Redeemer, and He "will come and heal us." Then shall we have comfort, whatever treatment we may meet with from the world: the world may mock us in our grief and laugh at our sorrow; the world withdraws itself from an afflicted soul, as it does from a corrupted body: even our friends and relations may take no part in our sufferings, and "stand afar off;" but God will be with us, and He is all-sufficient. "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation." 2 *Cor.* i. 3, 4. "Haste Thee to help me, O Lord God of my salvation."

QUESTIONS.

"Thine arrows stick fast in me?"—"My wickednesses are gone over my head?"—"Through my foolishness?"—Verse 11—15. Show how they refer to Christ.—Why are we punished for sin?—What should we do when we feel our sin to be grievous?

PSALM XXXIX.

Under some severe trial David keeps a watch over himself, and looks to his latter end: he gives a striking description of the shortness and vanity of human life, and prays for deliverance. This Psalm is used in the Burial Service.

1 I said, I will take heed to my ways: that I offend not in my tongue.

2 I will keep my mouth as it were with a bridle: while the ungodly is in my sight.

3 I held my tongue, and spake nothing: I kept silence, yea, even from good words; but it was pain and grief to me.

4 My heart was hot within me, and while I was thus musing the fire kindled: and at the last I spake with my tongue;

5 Lord, let me know mine end and the number of my days: that I may be certified how long I have to live.

6 Behold, thou hast made my days as it were a span long: and mine age is even as

nothing in respect of thee; and verily every man living is altogether vanity.

7 For man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain: he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.

8 And now, Lord, what is my hope: truly my hope is even in thee.

9 Deliver me from all mine offences: and make me not a rebuke unto the foolish.

10 I became dumb, and opened not my mouth: for it was thy doing.

11 Take thy plague away from me: I am even consumed by the means of thy heavy hand.

12 When thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, thou makest his beauty to consume away, like as it were a moth fretting a garment: every man therefore is but vanity.

13 Hear my prayer, O Lord, and with thine ears consider my calling: hold not thy peace at my tears.

14 For I am a stranger with thee: and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

15 O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength: before I go hence, and be no more seen.

Ver. 3. *yea, even from good words;*] For fear of giving offence to my enemies, without doing any good.

Ver. 4. *my heart was hot*] Burning with indignation at the crimes I witnessed, and with zeal for the honour of God.—*thus musing*] Thus thinking with myself.—*the fire kindled:*] My thoughts and affections became heated more and more, till at last they burst out, not in violence against my enemies, but in prayer to my God.

Ver. 5. *number of my days:*] He does not mean that he should know the exact number, but that he should be led to consider and feel how few his days were, and take comfort from knowing that his troubles would soon have an end.

Ver. 6. *in respect of thee;*] When compared with Thee, who art everlasting.

Ver. 7. *a vain shadow,*] All his earthly good is more like an empty shadow, than a solid substance; and so soon does it waste and vanish.—*shall gather them.*] Shall obtain or possess them.

Ver. 9. *a rebuke*] A reproach unto the wicked. *Psalm* xiv. 1.

Ver. 10. *became dumb,*] Uttered no complaint, but only a prayer of resignation for the removal of my plague,

ver. 11. Thus Jesus prayed, that the cup might pass from Him. *Matt.* xxvi. 39.

Ver. 12. *his beauty*] The health and strength of his bodily frame, or whatever it may be for which he is admired.—*a moth*] The rich had great stores of garments in that country, and the moths were very destructive. *Matt.* vi. 19, 20.

Ver. 14. *a stranger*] Earth is not my home.—*a sojourner,*] A lodger for a little while, as one on a journey.—*as all my fathers were.*] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all that were gone to their rest. Jacob calls life a pilgrimage or travel, *Gen.* xlvii. 9. And St. Paul shows very plainly, that the fathers considered themselves only as "strangers and pilgrims on the earth," not having fully received, but expecting the promised blessings. *Heb.* xi. 13—16. 39, 40.

Whenever our lot is cast among wicked people, and we are provoked by their unreasonable and ungodly behaviour, we must pray the Lord to "set a watch over our mouth, and keep the door of our lips," *Psalm* cxli. 3; that we say nothing which may do injury either to our own character, or to our holy religion. It is very dangerous to speak when we are angry, even in a good cause. Rather let us lift up our soul in prayer to God, that He may be pleased to take the matter into His own gracious hands, and to give us comfort in all our vexations and trials, from trusting in Him as our great good; and let us look to the end of our days, which will very soon be over. Nothing, in this life, is worth our anxious care; its troubles and its joys are alike but for a moment; it passes away as a dream, as a shadow, as a cloud; all that we possess must shortly be left, and we know not who will have it after us. We cannot live long, we may die soon and suddenly. How foolish then, and worse than foolish, to be taken up with the vanities of a few short years, and not to care and provide for that everlasting world, to which we are fast approaching every day! O Lord, spare me a little longer in this land of my *pilgrimage;* only till Thou hast made me ready to go home. And when my earthly course is run, and "I go hence and am no more seen," let me enter into "the rest that remaineth to the people of God." *Heb.* iv. 9.

QUESTIONS.

Why did David say he would take heed to his ways?—How

would he keep his mouth?—From what did he keep silence?—Why from good words?—My heart was hot?—Thus musing?—The fire kindled?—What did David speak with his tongue?—What did he mean by knowing the number of his days?—What were his days made?—How was his age nothing in respect of God?—What is every man living?—How does man walk? What was David's hope?—A rebuke unto the foolish?—I became dumb?—How does man's beauty consume away?—How was David a *stranger* and *sojourner?*—Who else were so?—Why did he pray to be spared?—What do we learn from this?

PSALM XL.

Though David here praised God for his own deliverance, the Holy Spirit led him to use language which properly applies to Jesus Christ, especially verse 8—10. *And therefore our Church uses this Psalm on* Good Friday. *It concludes with prayers for future blessings.*

1 I waited patiently for the Lord : and he inclined unto me, and heard my calling.

2 He brought me also out of the horrible pit, out of the mire and clay : and set my feet upon the rock, and ordered my goings.

3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth : even a thanksgiving unto our God.

4 Many shall see it, and fear : and shall put their trust in the Lord.

5 Blessed is the man that hath set his hope in the Lord : and turned not unto the proud, and to such as go about with lies.

6 O Lord my God, great are the wondrous works which thou hast done, like as be also thy thoughts which are to us-ward : and yet there is no man that ordereth them unto thee.

7 If I should declare them, and speak of them : they should be more than I am able to express.

8 Sacrifice and meat-offering, thou wouldest not : but mine ears hast thou opened.

9 Burnt-offerings, and sacrifice for sin, hast thou not required : then said I, Lo, I come.

10 In the volume of the book it is written of me, that I should fulfil thy will, O my God : I am content to do it; yea, thy law is within my heart.

11 I have declared thy righteousness in the great congregation : lo, I will not refrain my lips, O Lord, and that thou knowest.

12 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart : my talk hath been of thy truth, and of thy salvation.

13 I have not kept back thy loving mercy and truth : from the great congregation.

14 Withdraw not thou thy mercy from me, O Lord : let thy loving-kindness and thy truth always preserve me.

15 For innumerable troubles are come about me; my sins have taken such hold upon me, that I am not able to look up : yea, they are more in number than the hairs of my head, and my heart hath failed me.

16 O Lord, let it be thy pleasure to deliver me : make haste, O Lord, to help me.

17 Let them be ashamed, and confounded together, that seek after my soul to destroy it : let them be driven backward, and put to rebuke, that wish me evil.

18 Let them be desolate, and rewarded with shame : that say unto me, Fie upon thee, fie upon thee.

19 Let all those that seek thee be joyful and glad in thee : and let such as love thy salvation, say alway, The Lord be praised.

20 As for me, I am poor and needy : but the Lord careth for me.

21 Thou art my helper and redeemer : make no long tarrying, O my God.

Ver. 2.] We may consider Christ as speaking of Himself by the mouth of David, in every part of this Psalm. This verse foreshows His being brought out of the grave, and "set upon the rock" of ages, beyond the reach of the enemy, and for the salvation of His people.

Ver. 6. *no man that ordereth them*] "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?" *Rom.* xi. 34.

Ver. 8—10.] We are expressly informed (*Heb.* x. 5—7) that Christ Himself is to be regarded as speaking these words, and we may understand them thus: "Sacrifices Thou wouldest not," O God, Thou desirest and requirest not, as being of themselves sufficient to reconcile Thee to sinful man, and to procure his pardon: "but mine ears hast Thou opened," the ears of me, Thy beloved Son; I have heard in heaven the counsels of heaven for the salvation of man, and am prepared to attend to and execute the glorious scheme of redemption, by becoming "God manifest in the flesh." (1 *Tim.* iii. 16.) "Lo, I come," am ready to come "in the fulness of time," (*Gal.* iv. 4.) at the proper season, as it is written of me "in the volume of the book," in the Holy Scriptures, (*Gen.* iii. 15; xlix. 10.

Deut. xviii. 15—19.) "that I should fulfil Thy will, O my God," in the salvation of Thy people. St. Paul (*Heb.* x. 5.) does not quote the very words, as they stand in this Psalm, but he gives the same sense of the whole passage, as showing the obedience of Christ, in becoming a sacrifice for sin; and thus doing away those sacrifices of the law, which were of no value or effect, except as representing and foreshowing the one great sacrifice of Christ.

Ver. 10. *In the volume*] In the roll. The books were of parchment, rolled upon sticks. From this comes our word *volume*.

Ver. 11. *in the great congregation:*] David declared God's righteousness in the midst of his people: Christ declared it to the universal Church in all ages.

Ver. 15. *innumerable*] Without number, a vast many. —*my sins, &c.*] If Christ be regarded as speaking these words, He speaks them as one "upon whom the Lord laid the iniquities of us all," (*Isa.* liii. 6.) and therefore He calls our iniquities His own.

Ver. 17. *Let them, &c.*] These two verses foretel the shame and misery of the Jewish people, for their opposition to Christ.—*Fie upon thee,*] A term of reproach.

Ver. 19, 20, 21, foreshow the joyful deliverance of Christ and His Church.

Again we hear the sufferings of the Lord Jesus set forth from the harp of David: He who did no sin, became a sin-offering for us, and gave His life "a ransom for many," *Matt.* xx. 28, that, as no other sacrifice was sufficient, "for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins," *Heb.* x. 4, therefore Christ Jesus "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." *Phil.* ii. 8. But after He had "waited patiently," and drunk the cup of sorrow even to the dregs, He was "brought out of the horrible pit," and triumphed over death and hell; a new song of victory and thanksgiving resounded in the heavens and the earth, when Jesus was exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. Happy they who depend upon Him for salvation, and show their dependence by fulfilling, as He did, the will of their heavenly Father. Where, without Him, should we have been in the "horrible pit" of everlasting destruction: "our sins would have taken such hold upon us, that we should never have been able to look

up" to God for pardon. O let us value the mercy of our dear Redeemer; let us look to Him alone for salvation, and beseech Him "to set our feet upon the rock, and order our goings." He will "make no long tarrying," but will soon remove us out of the reach of sin and sorrow; and at length raise our bodies from the grave, that we may be with Him, and behold and share His glory for ever.

QUESTIONS.

How did David wait?—For whom?—From what did God bring him?—What does this foreshow?—Upon what did God set His feet?—What does this mean?—Explain verses 8, 9, 10. —Volume? — In the great congregation? — Innumerable?— What do verses 17, 18 foretel?—And what verses 19, 20, 21?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM XLI.

This Psalm contains a promise of blessings to the merciful, a description of David's enemies, a prayer for God's favour, and a song of triumph.

1 Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy: the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble.

2 The Lord preserve him, and keep him alive, that he may be blessed upon earth: and deliver not thou him into the will of his enemies.

3 The Lord comfort him, when he lieth sick upon his bed: make thou all his bed in his sickness.

4 I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.

5 Mine enemies speak evil of me: When shall he die, and his name perish?

6 And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: and his heart conceiveth falsehood within himself, and when he cometh forth, he telleth it.

7 All mine enemies whisper together against me: even against me do they imagine this evil.

8 Let the sentence of guiltiness proceed against him: and now that he lieth, let him rise up no more.

9 Yea, even mine own familiar friend, whom I trusted: who did also eat of my bread, hath laid great wait for me.

10 But be thou merciful unto me, O Lord: raise thou me up again, and I shall reward them.

11 By this I know thou favourest me: that mine enemy doth not triumph against me.
12 And when I am in my health, thou upholdest me: and shalt set me before thy face for ever.
13 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel: world without end. Amen.

Ver. 1. *Blessed, &c.*] Thus saith the Son of David, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." *Matt.* v. 7.

Ver. 3. *his bed:*] Thou wilt give him ease, such as the sick man finds from the making of his bed. Probably David was upon his sick bed when he wrote this Psalm, ver. 8.

Ver. 6. *he speaketh vanity:*] He talks deceitfully. Thus did the enemies of Christ, *Luke* xx. 20. And the latter part of the verse exactly describes the conduct of Judas at the last supper. *John* xiii. 18—30.

Ver. 7. *do they imagine*] Do they contrive.

Ver. 8. *let the sentence, &c.*] David's enemies say this, "Let a sentence of 'guilty' be passed upon him." How anxious were the enemies of Christ to have Him pronounced guilty by Pilate and by Herod! *Luke* xxiii. 1—11.—*now that he lieth,*] On his sick bed.

Ver. 9. *familiar friend,*] The wicked and crafty Ahithophel is supposed to be here alluded to, 2 *Sam.* xvi. 23. But the treachery of Judas is also foreshown, as our Lord Himself bears witness. *John* xiii. 18: "that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with Me hath lifted up his heel against Me."—*great wait*] A great snare.

Ver. 10. *reward them.*] Shall "pay them that they have deserved;" shall execute Thy judgments upon them. Thus Jesus, when He was "raised up again," was avenged of His enemies, destroying the "bloody city."

Ver. 12. *before thy face*] In thy favour.

After the Lord's example of kindness and compassion, the disciple must also learn to pity his poor and afflicted brethren. His blessed Saviour promises him a gracious reward, considering every act of kindness to a brother as done unto Himself. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." *Matt.* xxv. 40. The most humble and upright may expect to meet with enemies, and (what is worse) with false friends, as Jesus did: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you."

John xv. 18. And we must also expect, for the sake of trial and correction, our share of sickness and of suffering. But if we have been kind and faithful, God will smooth and comfort our sick bed: if we suffer patiently, God will support and bless us, and carry us safely through every trouble, and beyond the reach of every enemy. Yea, and after we have lain upon the bed of death, we shall be "raised up again" on the latter day, and sing the song of gladness and of glory, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting and to everlasting. *Amen* and *Amen*."

QUESTIONS.

Who is blessed?—What shall the Lord do for him?—Repeat our Saviour's promise to the merciful.—Make Thou all his bed?—He speaketh vanity?—What did David's enemies say against him?—How does this apply to Christ?—Who was the familiar and false friend of David?—Who of Christ?—Shall reward them?—Before Thy face?—Repeat David's song of praise.

PSALM XLII.

This Psalm was composed when David, on some occasion, was deprived of the means of public worship; perhaps during Absalom's rebellion, 2 Sam. xv. 13—23. *It is a beautiful picture of his soul, feeling the want of God's presence, and moved by the continual changes of joy and sorrow, hope and fear; but he rests in God.*

1 Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks: so longeth my soul after thee, O God.

2 My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God: when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?

3 My tears have been my meat day and night: while they daily say unto me, Where is now thy God?

4 Now when I think thereupon, I pour out my heart by myself: for I went with the multitude, and brought them forth into the house of God;

5 In the voice of praise and thanksgiving: among such as keep holy-day.

6 Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul: and why art thou so disquieted within me?

7 Put thy trust in God: for I will yet give him thanks for the help of his countenance.

8 My God, my soul is vexed within me: therefore will I remember thee concerning the land of Jordan, and the little hill of Hermon.

9 One deep calleth another,

because of the noise of the water-pipes: all thy waves and storms are gone over me.

10 The Lord hath granted his loving-kindness in the day-time: and in the night season did I sing of him, and made my prayer unto the God of my life.

11 I will say unto the God of my strength, Why hast thou forgotten me: why go I thus heavily, while the enemy oppresseth me?

12 My bones are smitten asunder, as with a sword: while mine enemies, that trouble me, cast me in the teeth;

13 Namely, while they say daily unto me: Where is now thy God?

14 Why art thou so vexed, O my soul: and why art thou so disquieted within me?

15 O put thy trust in God: for I will yet thank him, which is the help of my countenance, and my God.

Ver. 1. *Like as the hart*] As the hunted deer on the burning dusty plain, dying with thirst, panteth for a stream of water, so did David thirst for the house and worship of his God. This figure fitly represents the longing of the soul for God, in the dry and barren wilderness of this mortal life.

Ver. 2. *the living God:*] Not like the dead idols in that country, which could give no help.

Ver. 3. *my tears, &c.*] I have no appetite for food, I can do nothing but shed tears; it is as if I lived upon them.

Ver. 4. *I went, &c.*] When he had the opportunity: in days past he did not neglect it: and the remembrance of this was a great comfort to him. Thus will it be a comfort to us, when kept from God's house, by sickness, or any other means, to remember that we did gladly go, when God gave us liberty: our heart will be there, though we be confined at home.

Ver. 6, 7.] David reasons with his soul, and chides his complaining spirit, bidding it depend upon God; *for I will, &c.*] I shall yet, notwithstanding my present afflicted state, again have cause to give Him thanks for my deliverance.

Ver. 8. *my soul is vexed*] Again his spirit fails, and therefore he resolves to remember the land and the hill on which he had been once favoured. In the *Bible version* it is, "I will remember Thee *from* the land of Jordan," even from that desolate part of it to which I am driven.

Ver. 9. *One deep calleth, &c.*] The sense is this: as one part of the sea, in a violent storm, rises and rushes against another, wave against wave, (as if they "called" to one another,) when the roaring water-spouts fall from the clouds, so have I had, in these sad times, troubles upon troubles, which seemed as if they called to one another to meet together upon my head and destroy me. Afflictions are often compared to waters. *Psalm* xviii. 16; xxxii. 7.

Ver. 10.] Another change to cheerful thoughts.—*the God of my life.*] The God who preserveth my life.

Ver. 12. *My bones, &c.*] I feel as much as if my bones were thus smitten.—*cast me in the teeth;*] Reproach me.

Ver. 15. *the help of my countenance,*] Making me to *look bright* with joy and gladness.

PSALM XLIII.

This Psalm may be regarded as a continuation of the Forty-second; as it was another upon the same subject.

1 Give sentence with me, O God, and defend my cause against the ungodly people: O deliver me from the deceitful and wicked man.

2 For thou art the God of my strength, why hast thou put me from thee: and why go I so heavily, while the enemy oppresseth me?

3 O send out thy light and thy truth, that they may lead me: and bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy dwelling.

4 And that I may go unto the altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness: and upon the harp will I give thanks unto thee, O God, my God.

5 Why art thou so heavy, O my soul: and why art thou so disquieted within me?

6 O put thy trust in God: for I will yet give him thanks, which is the help of my countenance, and my God.

Ver. 1. *Give sentence with me,*] Speak and decide in my favour.

Ver. 3. *thy light and thy truth,*] Thy favour made known in the truth of Thy promises, shown me according to Thy word. Thus bring me to Thy hill of Sion and to Thy house.

The faithful servant of God is always either delighting in Him, or mourning after Him. When he has the opportunity

of waiting upon Him in his ordinances of public prayer and praise, they are the joy of his soul: and when any sickness or calamity deprives him of them, he grieves more for the loss of his attendance upon God, than for any worldly troubles. In such seasons of sadness, we must remember, with thankfulness, our past mercies; and betake ourselves to prayer for the Lord's returning goodness; and examine ourselves, to see for what offences our affliction may have been sent; and humbly repent before God, that He may be pleased to remove our load of sorrow. Above all, we must "watch and pray" against a murmuring and repining spirit; we must exercise a holy faith and confidence in God, and not be "disquieted and cast down," as if He had utterly forgotten us. "O cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall nourish and sustain thee, and shall not suffer the righteous to fall for ever." *Psalm* lv. 23. One word from Him will calm every storm, turn the midnight darkness into the light of noon; and our bitterest complaints into joyful praises. "O put thy trust in God," and thou shalt be brought to thank Him for thy everlasting deliverance.

QUESTIONS.

Like what did David's soul long after God?—What does this teach us?—My tears have been my meat?—In what did David find comfort, ver. 4, 5?—How did he chide his soul?—One deep calleth another, &c.?—My bones are smitten asunder?—Cast me in the teeth?—What did the enemies say?—Give sentence with me, O God?—Send out thy light and thy truth?—Thy holy hill and Thy dwelling?

THE NINTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM XLIV.

It is not certain who wrote this Psalm: we hear in it the voice of the Church, in a state of persecution and suffering; yet thankfully remembering God's mercies of old, and resolving still to trust in Him, and praying for speedy help.

1 We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us: what thou hast done in their time of old;

2 How thou hast driven out the heathen with thy hand, and planted them in: how thou hast destroyed the nations and cast them out.

3 For they got not the land in possession through their own sword: neither was it their own arm that helped them;

4 But thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance: because thou hast a favour unto them.

5 Thou art my King, O God: send help unto Jacob.

6 Through thee will we overthrow our enemies: and in thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us.

7 For I will not trust in my bow: it is not my sword that shall help me;

8 But it is thou that savest us from our enemies: and puttest them to confusion that hate us.

9 We make our boast of God all day long: and will praise thy name for ever.

10 But now thou art far off, and puttest us to confusion: and goest not forth with our armies.

11 Thou makest us to turn our backs upon our enemies: so that they which hate us spoil our goods.

12 Thou lettest us be eaten up like sheep: and hast scattered us among the heathen.

13 Thou sellest thy people for nought: and takest no money for them.

14 Thou makest us to be rebuked of our neighbours: to be laughed to scorn, and had in derision of them that are round about us.

15 Thou makest us to be a by-word among the heathen: and that the people shake their heads at us.

16 My confusion is daily before me: and the shame of my face hath covered me;

17 For the voice of the slanderer and blasphemer: for the enemy and avenger.

18 And though all this be come upon us, yet do we not forget thee: nor behave ourselves frowardly in thy covenant.

19 Our heart is not turned back: neither our steps gone out of thy way;

20 No, not when thou hast smitten us into the place of dragons: and covered us with the shadow of death.

21 If we have forgotten the name of our God, and holden up our hands to any strange god: shall not God search it out? for he knoweth the very secrets of the heart.

22 For thy sake also are we killed all the day long: and are counted as sheep appointed to be slain.

23 Up, Lord, why sleepest thou: awake, and be not absent from us for ever.

24 Wherefore hidest thou thy face: and forgettest our misery and trouble?

25 For our soul is brought low, even unto the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the ground.

26 Arise, and help us: and deliver us for thy mercy's sake.

Ver. 2. *planted them in:*] Planted our fathers in, the people of Israel, who got possession of the "nations" of Canaan by the arm of the Lord. See the book of Joshua, especially chap. x. 9, 10.—*planted*] As a vine, *Isaiah* v. 1—7.

Ver. 3. *the land*] Of Canaan.

Ver. 4, *the light, &c.*] Thy presence and help. The Lord is spoken of as fighting the battle of Israel, ver. 10.

Ver. 5. *unto Jacob.*] To the people of Israel.

Ver. 11. *spoil*] Lay waste and destroy.

Ver. 13. *Thou sellest, &c.*] Thou treatest them like a thing of no value; or, Thou lettest them be sold for slaves, at any price, or no price.

Ver. 14. *had in derision*] Mocked at.

Ver. 15. *a by-word*] A name of reproach; every passer-by insults us.

Ver. 17. *For the voice*] This is the reason why the Psalmist was in confusion and cast down: it was because of the "voice of the slanderer," &c.

Ver. 18. *nor behave, &c.*] We are not offended at these Thy dealings with us, so as to be made perverse, and to break our covenant with Thee: by turning aside to the heathen and to idols. ver. 21.

Ver. 20. *the place of dragons:*] A dreary and dreadful place, like those inhabited by none but wild beasts. Perhaps their enemies may be alluded to, under the figure of dragons, as in *Psalm* lxxiv. 14.—*covered us, &c.*] Brought us to the very brink of destruction.

Ver. 22. *are we killed, &c.*] We are in danger of death. Thus St. Paul, 1 *Cor.* xv. 31: "I die daily." And the Apostle applies this verse to the persecuted Christians of his day. *Rom.* viii. 36.

Ver. 23. *why sleepest thou?*] As when God interferes for the protection of His people, He is said to watch over them, and have His eye upon them, so when He leaves them in trouble, He is said to sleep; therefore the Psalmist calls upon Him to arise and awake. These are only figures and ways of speaking: God has no eyes, nor any bodily parts: God never sleeps.

Ver. 25. *cleaveth, &c.*] We are as people smitten down upon the earth, and unable to rise or stir.

The Church of God is one body, from the beginning to the end of the world; and when we hear of the favours which God wrought for our fathers aforetime, we should praise Him and be thankful, as if the mercy had been shown in our own day. When we hear of the wonderful works wrought for Israel, in bringing them out of Egypt, and settling them in Canaan; or of the still more glorious works of God, in delivering the early Christian Church from her world of enemies, and settling her in sure habitations; we should bless the name of our God, and learn to hope and pray for the tokens of His love and power towards us also, as our circumstances may require. The Lord has always hitherto saved His people, and we may still "boast of Him all the day long." Appearances will sometimes be against us: we may be tempted to think that God is "sleeping," that the eye of His providence is closed; but He is only waiting, that we may feel our own weakness, and pray earnestly for His help, and depend on Him alone. God knoweth the heart: and if the heart be right with Him, we are sure of His mercy through Jesus Christ our Lord. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." *Deut.* xxxiii. 27.

QUESTIONS.

What have our fathers told us?—Who were driven out?—Who planted in?—And where?—How did Israel get possession of Canaan?—Send help unto Jacob?—Spoil our goods?—Sellest thy people for nought?—A by-word?—Frowardly in Thy covenant, verse 18.—Into the place of dragons?—Killed all the day long?—Who else uses this form of speech?—Why sleepest Thou?

PSALM XLV.

It has been thought that this Psalm was written upon the marriage of Solomon with Pharaoh's daughter. 1 Kings iii. 1. *But this is by no means certain. It is very certain that many parts of it cannot be applied to Solomon, nor to any other earthly king. The Psalm does, however, clearly describe the marriage of some great king; it is the marriage of the King Messiah, of Jesus Christ, to His Church, which is often spoken of as His wife, or bride. See on* Psalm xix. 5.

Accordingly, this is one of the proper Psalms for Christmas-day.

1 My heart is inditing of a good matter : I speak of the things which I have made unto the King.

2 My tongue is the pen : of a ready writer.

3 Thou art fairer than the children of men : full of grace are thy lips, because God hath blessed thee for ever.

4 Gird thee with thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most mighty : according to thy worship and renown.

5 Good luck have thou with thine honour : ride on, because of the word of truth, of meekness, and righteousness ; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

6 Thy arrows are very sharp, and the people shall be subdued unto thee : even in the midst among the king's enemies.

7 Thy seat, O God, endureth for ever : the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.

8 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity : wherefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

9 All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia : out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

10 Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women : upon thy right hand did stand the queen in a vesture of gold, wrought about with divers colours.

11 Hearken, O daughter, and consider, incline thine ear : forget also thine own people, and thy father's house.

12 So shall the king have pleasure in thy beauty : for he is thy Lord God, and worship thou him.

13 And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift : like as the rich also among the people shall make their supplication before thee.

14 The King's daughter is all glorious within : her clothing is of wrought gold.

15 She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework : the virgins that be her fellows shall bear her company, and shall be brought unto thee.

16 With joy and gladness shall they be brought : and shall enter into the King's palace.

17 Instead of thy fathers thou shalt have children : whom thou mayest make princes in all lands.

18 I will remember thy Name from one generation to another : therefore shall the people give thanks unto thee, world without end.

Ver. 1. *is inditing*] Is conceiving, filled with the thoughts of—by the Holy Spirit.—*which I have made, &c.*] Which I have composed concerning the king.

Ver. 2. *My tongue, &c.*] Is like the pen of a free and well-instructed writer.

Ver. 3. *thou art fairer, &c.*] This properly applies to Him, who was "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person." *Heb.* i. 3. "For how great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty!" *Zech.* ix. 17.—*full of grace are thy lips,*] Jesus answered perfectly to this description: "All bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth." *Luke* iv. 22. Yea, even His enemies confessed, "Never man spake like this man." *John* vii. 46.

Ver. 4. *Gird thee, &c.*] In this and the two following verses, the King is represented as a warrior and conqueror, which Solomon never was. It looks forward to Christ as a spiritual warrior and conqueror, "putting all enemies under His feet;" "going forth conquering and to conquer." *Rev.* vi. 2.—*thy sword*] The sword of Messiah is His word. *Heb.* iv. 12. *Rev.* i. 16.—*worship and renown.*] Honour and greatness.

Ver. 5. *Good luck*] A form of blessing; "may you prosper!"—*thy right hand, &c.*] Thou shalt do mighty things; for great is Thy strength, and terrible are Thy weapons.

Ver. 7. *Thy seat, O God,*] Thy throne. It is quite impossible that such language can be addressed to any mere mortal, to any earthly king: it is addressed to Jesus Christ, as St. Paul assures us, "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," &c.] *Heb.* i. 8. Messiah is foretold as the "mighty God." *Isa.* ix. 6. He is "over all, God blessed for ever." *Rom.* ix. 5. The sceptre was a kind of staff of office, which a king held in his hand.

Ver. 8. *Heb.* i. 9.] Wherefore Jehovah hath anointed Thee (see on *Psalm* ii. 2,) as the king, and priest, and prophet of Thy Church with heavenly oil: with the Holy Ghost, beyond measure, *John* iii. 34, and thus with gladness.—*above thy fellows.*] Either above Thy brethren, above all mankind; or above Thy fellow kings, (as ver. 15,) above all other kings; making Thee "King of kings, and Lord of lords." *Rev.* xix. 16.

Ver. 9. *Thy garments smell*] The garments of princes were richly perfumed: so was the holy oil, or ointment, for the garments of the high priest: and the very drugs here mentioned were used, "myrrh, aloes, and cassia," being expressly so ordered by the Lord. *Exod.* xxx. 23, 24. These perfumes of the King's robes may denote the sweet savour of heavenly graces in the person of our eternal King, Christ Jesus; which fill His palace above and His courts below, making His people "glad," refreshing them as with fragrant odours.—*ivory palaces,*] Palaces ornamented with ivory, with ivory furniture.

Ver. 10. *thy honourable women:*] Attending in honour of Thy marriage. Thus perhaps foreshowing that persons of the highest rank, "kings' daughters," and others, should come to Christ. See *Isaiah* xlix. 23.—*the queen*] The bride, and emblem of the Church, or the whole body of believers; her beautiful vesture of gold showing the graces and virtues, "the garments of salvation," with which the righteous should be clothed. *Isa.* lxi. 10.—*divers colours.*] Different, various colours.

Ver. 11. *Hearken, O daughter,*] Under the figure of a father addressing his daughter at her marriage, the Heavenly Father is described as addressing the Church; as if He had said, "O thou, whom I have begotten unto a lively hope, and whom I have taken out of the world, (to be 'the Lamb's wife,' *Rev.* xxi. 9,) hearken to my voice. Thou art entering upon a new state; thou must leave thy former people and connexions in the world, and cleave to thy Lord with all thy heart and all thy mind."

Ver. 12. *he is thy Lord God,*] How could it be said of any earthly prince, that he was the Lord God of any person? But Jesus is such a King, and He has "pleasure in the beauty" of His Church, in her holiness and virtue. He loveth her.—*Ephes.* v. 25—27.

Ver. 13. *the daughter of Tyre*] Tyre was a large and flourishing city of the Gentiles: and the Psalmist here foretels the coming in of the Gentiles to the Gospel of Christ. *Isaiah* lv. 1—5.—*like as the rich*] *Even* the rich, as in the Bible translation.

Ver. 14. *The King's daughter*] The bride was the daughter of some king, whether Pharaoh or not, as well

as married to a king. But the verse describes that she was, as a *wife* or bride.—*all glorious within :*] This represents the inward purity of God's true Church and people, as cleansed by the blood of Christ and the washing of the Holy Ghost.—*of wrought gold.*] And this shows the excellency of the Church's character, and of her services and ordinances; it shows how she would "adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour in all things." *Tit.* ii. 10.

Ver. 15. *raiment of needlework :*] In the choicest garment: the ancient people were very curious in this art. *Judges* v. 30.—*her fellows*] Of the same rank with herself, kings' daughters or relations, verse 10. This again shows the gathering of the rich and noble into the Church.

Ver. 17. *Instead of thy fathers*] Though thou art to forget "thy father's house," ver. 10, and be taken from thine own family, thou shalt have "children instead;" and they shall become princes in various lands. Thus is the Church of Christ taken out of the world, and made the mother of a numerous offspring, far more noble and honourable than the greatest earthly princes. Christians are called by St. Peter "a royal priesthood." 1 *Pet.* ii. 9. And St. John speaks of Christ as having "made us kings and priests unto God and His Father." *Rev.* i. 6.—*in all lands.*] This foretels the spreading of Christ's kingdom all over the world.

Ver. 18. *I will remember, &c.*] I will make Thy name to be remembered throughout all generations, and to all eternity. This last verse shows that the Psalmist is speaking not merely of an earthly king, and his marriage and children, but of a heavenly. "Behold, a greater than Solomon is here." *Matt.* xii. 42.

We should be thankful for the wonderful testimony borne in the Psalm, to Christ and His Church above 1000 years before He came into the world: we behold here the work of the Spirit, preparing the way for the coming of our Lord. His connexion with, and affection for His people are expressed by the nearest and dearest of all human ties of relationship; and well may they rejoice in His exceeding love, and in the glory

of thus belonging to Him: He is their "Lord God;" His throne is for ever and ever; well may they "worship Him." His bride, the Church, must maintain her character: she must be pure and glorious within; honourable and righteous without. And so must all her true children be; they must be like their Lord, "loving righteousness and hating iniquity:" they must give up the vanities and follies of their worldly interest and connexions, and "cleave stedfastly unto the Lord." "They are not of the world, but Christ has chosen them out of the world." *John* xv. 19. "HIS they are, HIM they must serve." *Acts* xxvii. 23. O that we may ever remember, that we must, here upon earth, be clothed with the wedding-garment of the gospel, (*Matt.* xxii. 11—14,) with "righteousness and true holiness;" in order that we may be of the blessed number of those, "which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb," (*Rev.* xix. 9,) in His heavenly and eternal kingdom.

QUESTIONS.

What is inditing?—What was the Psalmist's heart inditing?—What was his tongue?—What is meant by a ready writer?—What is the subject of the Psalm?—Who was fairer than the children of men?—What were his lips?—Where is this said of Christ?—By what figure is Christ described in verses 4, 5, 6?—Thy seat, O God, &c.?—To whom do these words apply?—Where are they applied?—Above thy fellows?—Of what did the king's garments smell?—What did this show?—Ivory palaces?—Who was the queen?—What was her vesture?—What did it denote?—Explain verses 11, 12.—The daughter of Tyre?—Who was glorious within?—What does this mean?—Instead of thy fathers, &c. explain this.—I will remember thy name?—How long?—What does this prove?

PSALM XLVI.

The Church, in time of trouble, expresses her trust and confidence in God.

1 God is our hope and strength: a very present help in trouble.

2 Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved: and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea.

3 Though the waters thereof rage and swell: and though the mountains shake at the tempest of the same.

4 The rivers of the flood thereof shall make glad the city of God: the holy place

of the tabernacle of the most Highest.

5 God is in the midst of her, therefore shall she not be removed : God shall help her, and that right early.

6 The heathen make much ado, and the kingdoms are moved : but God hath showed his voice, and the earth shall melt away.

7 The Lord of hosts is with us : the God of Jacob is our refuge.

8 O come hither, and behold the works of the Lord : what destruction he hath brought upon the earth.

9 He maketh wars to cease in all the world : he breaketh the bow, and knappeth the spear in sunder, and burneth the chariots in the fire.

10 Be still then, and know that I am God : I will be exalted among the heathen, and I will be exalted in the earth.

11 The Lord of hosts is with us : the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Ver. 1. *present help*] Always most readily to be found.

Ver. 2. *though the earth, &c.*] Even in the most terrible earthquakes : though all nature be convulsed.

Ver. 4. *the rivers, &c.*] The streams thereof, the streams of the city Jerusalem, the city of the people of God, shall flow in peace and plenty, though other places be laid waste. In the *Bible version* it is, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God:" which is an emblem of the comforts to flow into the Church from the Holy Spirit, and into the heart of every true believer.

Ver. 5. *in the midst of her,*] Of the city.—*right early.*] Very soon, very readily.

Ver. 6. *melt away.*] All earthly power shall be as wax before the fire, as snow before the sun.

Ver. 7. *is with us :*] Emmanuel, GOD WITH US, is always the refuge and protection of His people. *Matt.* i. 23.

Ver. 8. *what destruction*] How He has destroyed the enemies of His Church.

Ver. 9. *knappeth*] Breaketh short.—*burneth the chariots*] The conquerors used sometimes to burn the weapons of their foes. *Ezek.* xxxix. 9, 10. It means, "God shall subdue them utterly."

Ver. 10. *Be still then,*] Jehovah speaks : "Complain not, doubt not, leave your case with me : I will gain for you the victory." *Deut.* ix. 14. *Rom.* viii. 37.

All who "seek refuge and strength" in the power, wisdom, and mercy of God in Jesus Christ, shall find Him ever a ready and present help. Of whatever kind their troubles may be; whether nature be laid waste or kingdoms be overthrown; whether friends forsake or enemies rise up, there is a peaceful river in the city of God; there are plentiful streams of comfort, flowing from the fountain of grace and truth. Happy are they who belong to the holy city, the Church of God upon earth; and to the heavenly city, the holy Jerusalem above. *Heb.* xii. 22. *Rev.* xxi. 10. Their faith and patience will be tried indeed, so long as they are in the flesh: "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." John xvi. 33. Through life and death, let this be our answer to every trouble, and every enemy, and every danger, and every fear, "The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge."

QUESTIONS.

What is God?—What is He in trouble?—Therefore we will not fear, though, &c.—Explain ver. 4.—Right early?—Knappeth?—"Burneth the chariots," what custom does this allude to?—What does it signify?—Be still then?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM XLVII.

A Psalm of joy and thanksgiving, written, as Psalms xv. and xxvi. *were, on the removal of the ark to Mount Sion,* 2 Sam. vi.; *and as the ark was a type of Christ, the taking it up to Sion represented our Saviour being taken up to heaven: and therefore this Psalm is read in our Church on* Ascension-day.

1 O clap your hands together, all ye people: O sing unto God with the voice of melody.

2 For the Lord is high, and to be feared: he is the great King upon all the earth.

3 He shall subdue the people under us: and the nations under our feet.

4 He shall choose out an heritage for us : even the worship of Jacob, whom he loved.

5 God is gone up with a merry noise : and the Lord with the sound of the trump.

6 O sing praises, sing praises unto our God : O sing praises, sing praises unto our King.

7 For God is the King of all the earth : sing ye praises with understanding.

8 God reigneth over the heathen : God sitteth upon his holy seat.

9 The princes of the people are joined unto the people of the God of Abraham : for God, which is very high exalted, doth defend the earth, as it were with a shield.

Ver. 1. *of melody.*] Rather of triumphant shouting. They "brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet." 2 *Sam.* vi. 15.

Ver. 2. *the great King*] Thus also it is said of Christ after His resurrection, *Matt.* xxviii. 18. *Col.* ii. 10.

Ver. 3.] From such words as these, the Jews were led to expect their Messiah as an earthly conqueror : whereas they only contain a figure, showing His spiritual power and dominion.

Ver. 4. *the worship*] The honour of Jacob ; that which was his honour ; namely the land of Canaan, his heritage or inheritance, "the glory of all lands," *Ezek.* xx. 15, and a type of heaven, the "true land of promise," *Heb.* xi. 9, 10.

Ver. 5. *God is gone up*] That is, the ark in which the presence of God dwelt, is gone up. The words apply to the ascension of Christ.—*the trump.*] See on ver. 1.

Ver. 8. *His holy seat.*] His holy throne. *Heb.* viii. 1. *Rev.* iii. 21.

Ver. 9. *The princes, &c.*] The princes of the heathen people join with the people of God, with the children of Abraham. This is a prophecy of the conversion of the heathen, after Christ ascended into the heavens. See on *Psalm* ii. 8 ; xlv. 13.—*very high exalted,*] *Phil.* ii. 9—11.

As the people of Israel shouted for joy, when the ark of God was rescued from the hands of their enemies, and taken up in triumph to Mount Sion : so let us rejoice, that our blessed Lord Jesus, after having "put all enemies under His feet," is gone

up into the heavens, where He sitteth on His throne of power and mercy and glory: able to do all things for His people; willing as able; even to make them partakers of His glory. *John* xvii. 24. He is our Lord and our King; let us bow before Him with reverence, submission, and love: let Him reign in our hearts; let our whole lives show to what kingdom we belong, to the kingdom of righteousness and glory. We must be His willing, holy, obedient subjects upon earth, if we hope to reign with Him in heaven.

QUESTIONS.

State the subject of this Psalm.—Why were the people to clap their hands?—With what voice to sing?—Melody?—He shall subdue, &c. verse 3, what does this foreshow?—The worship of Jacob?—With the sound of the trump, why?—Upon His holy seat?—Explain verse 9.—Of what is it a prophecy?—What other similar prophecies are in the Psalms?

PSALM XLVIII.

This is a Psalm in honour of Jerusalem, and of Jehovah as her King; who had lately, on some occasion of danger, protected her from invading enemies. And the earthly Jerusalem, in her beauty and excellency, was an emblem of the spiritual Church of God's redeemed people, which He has built up and protected by His Holy Spirit: hence this Psalm is appointed to be read on Whitsunday, *when we celebrate the descent of the Holy Ghost.* Acts ii.

1 Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised : in the city of our God, even upon his holy hill.

2 The hill of Sion is a fair place, and the joy of the whole earth : upon the north side lieth the city of the great king; God is well known in her palaces as a sure refuge.

3 For lo, the kings of the earth : are gathered, and gone by together.

4 They marvelled to see such things : they were astonished, and suddenly cast down.

5 Fear came there upon them, and sorrow : as upon a woman in her travail.

6 Thou shalt break the ships of the sea : through the east wind.

7 Like as we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God : God upholdeth the same for ever.

8 We wait for thy lovingkindness, O God : in the midst of thy temple.

9 O God, according to thy name, so is thy praise unto the world's end : thy right hand is full of righteousness.

10 Let the mount Sion rejoice, and the daughter of Judah be glad : because of thy judgements.

11 Walk about Sion, and go round about her : and tell the towers thereof.

12 Mark well her bulwarks, set up her houses : that ye may tell them that come after.

13 For this God is our God for ever and ever : he shall be our guide unto death.

Ver. 2. *a fair place,*] So Jerusalem is called, *Lam.* ii. 15, "The perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth." So is the Church the beauty of holiness, and the joy of all true believers.—*upon the north side*] Of the hill.—*in her palaces,*] Thus *Jerem.* viii. 19. "Is not the Lord in Zion? Is not her King in her?" And we may say, "Is not the Lord in the midst of His people? Does He not rule over and defend them?"

Ver. 3. *gathered, and gone, &c.*] They met together with their armies, for her destruction; and they are passed away, without being able to hurt her. So did the might of the world, Jews, heathens, kings, magistrates, and people, unite and "gather together" against the Christian Church; but they could not destroy it. We see many examples of this in the Acts of the Apostles.

Ver. 4. *They marvelled*] They wondered, as they were so many and mighty, at their defeat and overthrow. And still more wonderful was the deliverance of the early Christian Church from her powerful foes.

Ver. 6. *Thou shalt break, &c.*] Thou didst scatter them, O God, as ships are broken and scattered by a storm at sea. —*the east wind.*] A violent wind.

Ver. 7. *As we have heard,*] Of the great things done of old for Thy city and people, so have we now borne witness to Thy mercy, and will confide in Thy protection for the time to come. And the Christian Church has the same reason to trust in the power and goodness of her Lord; that He "will uphold the same for ever;" that according

to His word, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." *Matt.* xvi. 18.

Ver. 8. *We wait, &c.*] Whatever happens, we look to Thee, in humble prayer and worship. This agrees with the conduct of Jehoshaphat, 2 *Chron.* xx. 1—30, and of Hezekiah, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 1—22.

Ver. 9. *according, &c.*] According to the display of Thy mercy, power, and truth.

Ver. 10. *the daughter of Judah*] Jerusalem, *Psal.* ix. 14. —*of thy judgements.*] Upon her enemies.

Ver. 11. *Tell the towers*] Number them, count them.

Ver. 12. *her bulwarks,*] Her strong places, her outworks for defence.—*set up her houses:*] "Consider her palaces." *Bib. Vers.* The people are called upon to go round Jerusalem, to survey her in every part, and see how she was preserved unhurt in all her beauty and strength.

Ver. 13. *for ever and ever:*] These words show that, under the figure of temporal favour and prosperity to the earthly city, spiritual and eternal blessings are set forth in this Psalm. The Lord will guide His people "unto death," and to the gate of heaven.

The Church of Israel was preserved in the midst of her enemies, and why? "God was well known in her palaces as a sure refuge." The Church of Christ has also been preserved in the midst of her enemies; and for the same reason; the Lord has been her refuge and strength. And as the people of old, when in trouble and danger, waited patiently for the loving-kindness of Jehovah, in holy faith and prayer; so let us wait also, and we shall be defended and blessed in like manner. We shall behold the beauty of our spiritual Sion, under the ever-blessed Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and we shall find that, as it is given to be the "joy of the whole earth," so it is the joy and comfort of our own souls. "For this is our God for ever and ever;" He will guide all that believe and live in Him through life to death, and through death to glory: "For we look for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." *Heb.* xi. 10.

QUESTIONS.

Where is God highly to be praised?—The hill of Sion is what?—The kings of the earth are what?—At what did they

marvel?—Thou shalt break the ships?—Through the east wind?—For what did the people wait, and where?—Daughter of Judah?—Set up her houses?—Bulwarks?—Of what was Jerusalem an emblem or type?

PSALM XLIX.

The Psalmist describes, in the most solemn manner, the vast difference between the state of the righteous and that of the wicked, especially in their latter end: and shows that the righteous have no cause to be cast down in their afflictions, nor the wicked to boast in their prosperity.

1 O hear ye this, all ye people: ponder it with your ears, all ye that dwell in the world;

2 High and low, rich and poor: one with another.

3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom: and my heart shall muse of understanding.

4 I will incline my ear to the parable: and show my dark speech upon the harp.

5 Wherefore should I fear in the days of wickedness: and when the wickedness of my heels compasseth me round about?

6 There be some that put their trust in their goods: and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches.

7 But no man may deliver his brother: nor make agreement unto God for him;

8 For it cost more to redeem their souls: so that he must let that alone for ever;

9 Yea, though he live long: and see not the grave.

10 For he seeth that wise men also die, and perish together: as well as the ignorant and foolish, and leave their riches for other.

11 And yet they think that their houses shall continue for ever: and that their dwelling-places shall endure from one generation to another; and call the lands after their own names.

12 Nevertheless, man will not abide in honour: seeing he may be compared unto the beasts that perish; this is the way of them.

13 This is their foolishness: and their posterity praise their saying.

14 They lie in the hell like sheep, death gnaweth upon them, and the righteous shall have domination over them in the morning: their beauty shall consume in the sepulchre out of their dwelling.

15 But God hath delivered my soul from the place of hell: for he shall receive me.

16 Be not thou afraid, though one be made rich: or

if the glory of his house be increased;

17 For he shall carry nothing away with him when he dieth: neither shall his pomp follow him.

18 For while he lived, he counted himself an happy man: and so long as thou doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee.

19 He shall follow the generation of his fathers; and shall never see light.

20 Man being in honour hath no understanding: but is compared unto the beasts that perish.

Ver. 1. *O hear ye this,*] This truth which I am going to declare; the declaration begins in ver. 5.

Ver. 3. *shall muse*] Shall think and meditate. *Luke* iii. 15, "men mused in their hearts of John," &c.

Ver. 4. *to the parable:*] To this instruction and discourse. I will thoroughly attend to it myself.—*my dark speech*] My deep and important truths, which are dark, and not known to many: these I will set to music on my harp.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore, &c.*] The Psalmist begins his parable by asking a question.—*the days of wickedness:*] When wicked men abound.—*my heels, &c.*] It means, when the wicked are thick around me, so as to press upon my heels, threatening to overtake and throw me down.

Ver. 7. *deliver his brother:*] From death, none can escape it.

Ver. 8. *for it cost more*] To redeem the life of man; to save it by any price, cost more than any mere man can pay. Probably the words are intended to imply, that Christ alone, by the merit of His sacrifice, is sufficient to redeem the soul of man. He is the great and only Redeemer.

Ver. 9.] This verse must be joined with the 7th. "No man is the deliverer of his brother, though he live ever so long without seeing the grave:" but the *Bible Version* gives the better sense; "no man can redeem his brother, so that he should live for ever."

Ver. 10. *he seeth*] For it is seen, that the wisest die as well as the most foolish; and therefore man's wisdom can do nothing in this matter.

Ver. 12. *will not abide, &c.*] Though he be in all worldly prosperity, he cannot continue in it; it gives him

no means of continuance, even for a day.—*the beasts*] In regard to dying, he is like the beasts; he has no more power to continue his life than they have; but in regard to his state after death, he differs from them very widely: he has a soul that must give account of its deeds, in another world: but to this he pays no attention, no more than the beasts that perish for ever.

Ver. 13. *their posterity*] Their children, and children's children, act as if they praised their folly; that is, they do the same thing, treading in the steps of their foolish forefathers.

Ver. 14. *they lie in the hell, &c.*] In the grave, like sheep in a slaughter-house.—*gnaweth*] "Death shall feed on them." *Bib. Vers.*—*shall have domination, &c.*] The righteous shall have dominion over them, shall get the better of them, shall be advanced above them, when they awake from their sleep of death, on "the morning" of the resurrection. Here the Psalmist clearly alludes to the great truth, that mankind shall rise again from the grave. This was "a dark speech," ver. 4, not much known or received in that day.—*in the sepulchre*] In the grave,—*out of their dwelling.*] After they are carried out of their proud "dwelling-places," in which they seemed to think they should live for ever, ver. 11.

Ver. 15. *But God, &c.*] While all the beauty and the hope of rich ungodly men are perishing in the grave, my soul is redeemed from its power; for instead of my lying, like the wicked, in a wretched and hopeless state, the Lord "shall receive me" into His own glorious habitation.

Ver. 16.] The Psalmist begins here to draw the right conclusion from his inspired parable; namely, that when we see ungodly men made rich, we should never be disturbed, or "be afraid" that the Lord hath forgotten us; they will soon have an end, and "after this the judgement." *Heb.* ix. 27.

Ver. 18. *doest well, &c.*] So long as thou takest care of earthly things, and art prosperous, thou wilt be flattered, and made much of by the world.

Ver. 19. *He shall follow*] Let him "count himself" ever so happy, he shall die, as his forefathers have done.—*never see light.*] Never, after death. And when it is said

that the wicked shall not see light, it is meant that the righteous shall see it. By light after death is signified the light of God's favour in another state, the light of salvation. This the wicked shall never, never see.

Ver. 20.] Thus the foolish man when raised to earthly honour and fortune, is without understanding. Or we may rather take the *Bible Version;* "man, that is in honour and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish," ver. 12. If he does not understand, if he does not properly consider his state and duty, and his condition in another world, he lives and dies as if he were a beast.

How perishable are the riches, how fleeting the joys, how vain the boasting of the children of this world! A few short years at most, perhaps a few days, bring them to the grave, in which all their vanities and all their hopes are buried. Hear this, "high and low, rich and poor, one with another." Hear it, ye rich, and set not your hearts upon such foolish trifles: hear it, ye poor, and envy not. Rich and poor, seek your treasure elsewhere; in the eternal world to which ye are hastening every hour. O how thankful should we be to the God of mercy, who has had pity on our lost condition, and made known unto us the awful certainty of a world to come; a world of *darkness* and woe to the unbeliever and the wicked; a world of *light* and glory to every righteous believer! And is there one of us who can be heedless of this great truth? Who can live and die like the beasts that perish? Regardless and thoughtless of the precious immortal soul? When God speaks to us on such a subject, shall we not hear? If the people, in the Psalmist's day, were so foolish for looking to earthly things alone, what must we be, now that the blessed Jesus, by the glorious truth of His Gospel, and His rising again from the grave, has plainly assured us of a resurrection and a life to come? Now, that "we have seen the great light!" now that "the kingdom of heaven is opened to all believers!" Pray we for the grace of the Holy Spirit, that our hearts may be deeply affected, and our whole lives spent in preparing for eternity. This is "the one thing needful." Read our Lord's parable of the worldly man. *Luke* xii. 16—21. "God said unto him, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Hear the Apostle—"Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." *Col.* iii. 2.

QUESTIONS.

What great truth is made known in this Psalm?—Explain verse 4.—In the days of wickedness?—The wickedness of my heels, &c.?—No man may deliver his brother from what?—What did it cost to redeem the soul?—Man will not abide in honour?—Posterity?—What do they?—They lie in the hell?—Like what?—What shall the righteous have over them?—When?—What does this mean?—From what has God delivered the soul?—Why should we not be afraid, although one be made rich?—Thou doest well unto thyself?—Shall never see light?—What do the wicked die like?—How are they like the beasts?—How do they differ from them?

THE TENTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM L.

The Gentile world is called; the awful judgment of the world is declared; unfaithful and unholy Israel is condemned. The outward forms and services of religion are shown to be useless, and even hateful, without a penitent and obedient heart.

1 The Lord, even the most mighty God, hath spoken: and called the world, from the rising up of the sun, unto the going down thereof.

2 Out of Sion hath God appeared: in perfect beauty.

3 Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: there shall go before him a consuming fire, and a mighty tempest shall be stirred up round about him.

4 He shall call the heaven from above: and the earth, that he may judge his people.

5 Gather my saints together unto me: those that have made a covenant with me with sacrifice.

6 And the heaven shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself.

7 Hear, O my people, and I will speak: I myself will testify against thee, O Israel; for I am God, even thy God.

8 I will not reprove thee, because of thy sacrifices, or for thy burnt-offerings: because they were not alway before me.

9 I will take no bullock out of thine house: nor he-goat out of thy folds.

10 For all the beasts of the forest are mine: and so are

the cattle upon a thousand hills.

11 I know all the fowls upon the mountains : and the wild beasts of the field are in my sight.

12 If I be hungry, I will not tell thee : for the whole world is mine, and all that is therein.

13 Thinkest thou that I will eat bulls' flesh : and drink the blood of goats ?

14 Offer unto God thanksgiving : and pay thy vows unto the most Highest.

15 And call upon me in the time of trouble : so will I hear thee, and thou shalt praise me.

16 But unto the ungodly said God : why dost thou preach my laws, and takest my covenant in thy mouth ;

17 Whereas thou hatest to be reformed : and hast cast my words behind thee ?

18 When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst unto him : and hast been partaker with the adulterers.

19 Thou hast let thy mouth speak wickedness : and with thy tongue thou hast set forth deceit.

20 Thou satest, and spakest against thy brother : yea, and hast slandered thine own mother's son.

21 These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue, and thou thoughtest wickedly, that I am even such a one as thyself : but I will reprove thee, and set before thee the things that thou hast done.

22 O consider this, ye that forget God : lest I pluck you away, and there be none to deliver you.

23 Whoso offereth me thanks and praise, he honoureth me : and to him that ordereth his conversation right will I show the salvation of God.

Ver. 1. *hath spoken :*] Shall speak : in foretelling an event, the prophets often speak of what is to come, as if it were already done ; and thus signify the certainty of the thing. The preaching of the Gospel is here pointed out, whereby God "hath spoken unto us by His Son." *Heb.* i. 1.—*from the rising, &c.*] From east to west, that is, through the whole earth.

Ver. 2. *Out of Sion*] The mercy of God shall shine forth from Sion, from Jerusalem, as the terrors of the law had been set forth in Sinai. *Exod.* xix. *Heb.* xii. 18. The perfect beauty of Sion was an emblem of the excellency and glory of Jesus, "God manifest in the flesh ;" by whom the word of grace and truth was spoken at Jerusalem.

Ver. 3. *shall come,*] To judge the world, in the fulness of time ; after the Gospel has been fully preached.—*not keep silence :*] Shall not forbear, as men do, when they speak not : but shall come with a voice of thunder ; and

clothed with such dreadful majesty, as the terrors of Mount Sinai did but feebly represent.

Ver. 4. *the heaven, the earth,*] Angels, as well as men, shall witness the awful proceedings of judgment. *Matt.* xxv. 31, 32.

Ver. 5. *Gather, &c.*] "And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." *Matt.* xxiv. 31.—*a covenant*] The professors of my true religion, who serve me as I have appointed, by "sacrifice," and other ordinances.

Ver. 6. *God is judge himself.*] That is, our Lord Jesus Christ: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgement unto the Son." *John* v. 22.

Ver. 8. *because, &c.*] I have no complaint on this ground; thy offerings and sacrifice, thy outward and formal services, have been "alway before me," have been regularly attended to; my complaint is, that I have not thy heart. *Prov.* xxiii. 26.

Ver. 9. *I will take no bullock, &c.*] I will not accept them from thee.

Ver. 12. *If I be hungry,*] If I were, or could be, hungry, "I need not tell thee."

Ver. 13. *Thinkest thou, &c.*] The people, from depending so entirely upon the sacrifice itself, without a holy and obedient heart, acted as if they thought that the animals were eaten by the Lord, and were necessary to Him.

Ver. 14. *Offer unto God*] This is the service I require; a grateful heart, and a performance of all thy promises and duties; without which, sacrifices and forms of worship are nothing worth. The sacrifices under the law, and the ordinances of the Gospel, were all appointed by God; and therefore very valuable and very necessary: but of no use without repentance and righteousness.

Ver. 16—20. See *Rom.* ii. which gives a like description of the unholy and ungodly Jew.

Ver. 20. *own mother's son.*] Thy nearest brother, by both parents, mother as well as father; which was very often not the case with Jewish families. The nearer the relationship, the more shameful was the violation of the great law of love.

Ver. 21. *I held my tongue,*] I forbore to punish, and spared thee often;—*thou thoughtest, &c.*] Thou didst wickedly conclude, from my forbearing to punish, that I was like thyself, not caring for evil, or taking no account of it: whereas my goodness and long-suffering ought to have led thee to repentance; and were shown for that purpose. *Rom.* ii. 4, 5.—*set before thee*] I will remember, and bring to my mind all thy wickedness on the fearful day of reckoning; I will convince thee of thy sins, and punish thee for them. This threatened vengeance was duly executed upon the Jewish nation, on several occasions, especially in the destruction of their city after they had crucified the Lord Jesus, and rejected His Gospel; which terrible judgment may be regarded as a sure sign and emblem of the judgment upon all unrepentant sinners at the latter day.

Ver. 23. *he honoureth me:*] And he alone.—*his conversation*] His life and conduct. *Psalm* xxxvii. 14.

God spake in terror from Mount Sinai, as a lawgiver; He spake in gentleness and mercy from Mount Sion, as a Saviour; and soon He will speak to the whole race of mankind from His throne of judgment; to some with mercy, to others with terror. He will judge every one "according to his deeds," according to his knowledge and opportunities, and according to his use and improvement of them. It will be of no advantage to any on that heart-searching day to have been numbered with the people of God, unless there has been holy fruit in the character and life. To pretend a belief in God, and not to love and serve Him; to be admitted into covenant with Him, as His children, and yet not to be dutiful; to attend the courts of His house, on His holy days, and yet not to walk in His fear, and keep His commandments; all this is a mockery of God; "it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." *Isa.* i. 13. See also chap. lviii. But they have neglected and abused the light of the blessed Gospel, where the love of God shines forth "in perfect beauty," in the face of Jesus Christ: they will be the most severely dealt with; "unto them much has been given, and of them much will be required." *Luke* xii. 48. Though God bear with us long, and spare us year after year in His great mercy, yet if we do not turn to Him, in this our season of grace, we shall be punished the more, for having been longer spared. Search your heart: examine narrowly into your ways; compare them

with the word of God. None but the righteous are accepted believers and worshippers: and "he that doeth righteousness is righteous." 1 *John* iii. 7.

QUESTIONS.

Who hath spoken?—And called the world from what?—What does this calling mean?—Our Lord shall come, for what purpose?—Not keep silence?—He shall call the heaven and the earth?—Explain verse 5.—God is judge Himself?—What would God not reprove Israel for?—What did He complain of?—When will God accept our worship and service?—What must we offer?—What pay?—I held my tongue?—To whom will be shown the salvation of God?—What do we learn from this Psalm?

PSALM LI.

A Psalm of deep repentance for the sins of murder and adultery, 2 Sam. xi. xii., *well suited to the case of every returning sinner. It may be called the chief of the Penitential Psalms, and is used in the proper service for* Ash Wednesday.

1 Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness: according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offences.

2 Wash me throughly from my wickedness: and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my faults: and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified in thy saying, and clear when thou art judged.

5 Behold, I was shapen in wickedness: and in sin hath my mother conceived me.

6 But lo, thou requirest truth in the inward parts: and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly.

7 Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness: that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

9 Turn thy face from my sins: and put out all my misdeeds.

10 Make me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away from thy presence: and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

12 O give me the comfort of

thy help again : and establish me with thy free Spirit.

13 Then shall I teach thy ways unto the wicked : and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou that art the God of my health : and my tongue shall sing of thy righteousness.

15 Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord : and my mouth shall show thy praise.

16 For thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it thee : but thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.

17 The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit : a broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt thou not despise.

18 O be favourable and gracious unto Sion : build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness, with the burnt-offerings and oblations : then shall they offer young bullocks upon thine altar.

Ver. 1. *thy great goodness :*] David had no hope, but in God's undeserved goodness.

Ver. 2. *Wash me*] Under the law of Moses, there were many washings and purifyings, *John* iii. 25 ; to these David here alludes : "make me clean within."

Ver. 3. See on *Psalm* xxxii. 1—6.

Ver. 4. *Against thee only*] He had sinned very deeply against Uriah and many others, 2 *Sam.* xi. ; but this he felt as nothing in comparison with his ungrateful rebellion against God, whose holy law he had so scandalously broken, and to whom alone he could be made answerable. Moreover, he had concealed his crimes from the eye of man : but the Lord had witnessed them and brought them to light.—*be justified*] In the sentence which thou didst pass upon me, 2 *Sam.* xii. 10—12.—*clear when thou art judged.*] for Thy dealings toward me, *Rom.* iii. 4. I have fully deserved Thy righteous anger, and much more.

Ver. 5. *I was shapen, &c.*] David does not offer this as an excuse for his crimes ; only he was now more than ever convinced of the sad corruption of his nature.

Ver. 6. *but lo,*] Though man is sinful, Thy law will not bend to his sinfulness ; but Thou requirest inward purity and sincerity. God was now teaching him His holy lesson, by severe correction ; and would soon put true "wisdom" into the "secret" corners of his heart.

Ver. 7. *with hyssop,*] A branch or bunch of hyssop was

dipped in water, and the unclean person sprinkled with it; thus he was cleansed of bodily defilement. *Numb.* xix. This represented the cleansing power of the blood of Christ. *Heb.* ix. 13, 14. David means, that God would purify his soul by the Holy Spirit, as the flesh of the unclean person was purified by the sprinkling of water from the hyssop.—*thou shalt wash me,*] See on ver. 2. But perhaps David may here especially allude to the stain of blood that was upon him, as in ver. 14. See *Isaiah* i. 15, 16.—*whiter than snow.*] *Isaiah* i. 18.

Ver. 8. *the bones, &c.*] My sense of misery being as if all my bones were crushed and broken. *Psalm* vi. 2.—*may rejoice.*] *Matt.* v. 4.

Ver. 10. *a clean heart,*] God alone, who made the heart, can make it clean. "*Create* in me," *Bible Vers.* See the collect for Ash Wednesday.

Ver. 11. *from thy presence:*] The penitent soul dreads nothing so much as the thought of being cast away from the presence and Spirit of God. David had a terrible example before his eyes in the case of Saul. The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. 1 *Sam.* xvi. 14.

Ver. 12. *stablish*] Strengthen. Knowing his own weakness, he was afraid of falling again; and therefore prays to be supported by the all-sufficient grace of God. The Spirit may be called free, either from being freely and abundantly given, or because He sets the soul free from the dominion of sin.

Ver. 13. *Then shall I, &c.*] Thus our Lord to Peter, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." *Luke* xxii. 32.

Ver. 14. *of my health:*] Of my spiritual health, of my salvation.

Ver. 15. *shalt open my lips,*] Which have been closed by my sense of sin and shame, so that I dared not, could not, speak to Thee: so soon as I can speak, I will sing Thy praise.

Ver. 16. *no sacrifice:*] This is not the thing to be trusted to for the cleansing of my guilty soul. See 1 *Sam.* xv. 22, and *Mark* xii. 33. By the law, murder and adultery were punished with death: no sacrifice or satisfaction was

allowed, *Numb.* xxxv. 31. *Deut.* xxii. 22. And perhaps there may be here some allusion to this law.

Ver. 17. *The sacrifice*] That sacrifice, without which God will accept no other.—*not despise.*] Thou shalt honour and accept. *Matt.* v. 3. xii. 20.

Ver. 18. *unto Sion:*] Let not my guilt bring a curse upon my people, and prevent thy goodness to them.—*build thou the walls, &c.*] These were already begun. 2 *Sam.* v. 9. It means, "strengthen and defend thy people or thy Church."

Ver. 19. *with the sacrifice of righteousness,*] With the worship and service of the righteous; with those sacrifices which they offer, as the emblem of the great sacrifice to come, Jesus Christ the righteous. *Psalm* xl. 8—10.

The Royal Psalmist here sets an example to all sinners. Let them feel their misery; let them cast themselves on the Lord's undeserved mercy; let them freely and fully confess their guilt; let them earnestly desire to be delivered from its grievous burden, to have "a new heart, and a new spirit," *Ezek.* xviii. 31; to "put on the new man, which after God is *created* in righteousness and true holiness." *Eph.* iv. 24. Let them thus come to God, with their tears and their prayers, in the name of the great Redeemer, and their soul shall be delivered from its wretched captivity, and their peace with God shall be certainly made. The door of their lips shall be unlocked; they shall recover from their sin and shame; and magnify the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. Let them not despair on the one hand, however great and dreadful their transgressions; there is mercy for all. *Isa.* lv. 7. Let them not, on the other hand, "do the work deceitfully;" let nothing be kept back from God. Let them desire to be "washed throughly from their wickedness;" and to become a lesson and example to their brethren of all holiness and righteousness. And as they are firmly resolved to walk henceforth with God, let them pray to be "stablished, strengthened, settled." 1 *Pet.* v. 10. By the grace of that Holy Spirit who alone can "help their weakness," and enable them to stand, the merciful God invites, nay entreats, all thus to come unto Him, and promises to receive them: "Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts." *Zech.* i. 3. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." *Matt.* xi. 28—30.

QUESTIONS.

What was the occasion of this Psalm?—On what ground does David ask for mercy?—How did he pray to be washed?—And from what?—Explain verse 4.—How purged with hyssop?—And whiter than snow?—That the bones, &c.?—Make me, &c.?—Renew in me, &c.?—Cast me not away, &c.?—Take not, &c.?—Stablish?—Free Spirit?—What would he then teach?—Thou desirest no sacrifice?—What is the sacrifice of God?—What will God not despise?

PSALM LII.

Doeg, a wicked man of Edom, conspired against David, and slew a great number of priests, women, and children, at Saul's command. 1 Sam. xxii. 6—19. *In this Psalm David describes Doeg's baseness and crime, and praises God for his own merciful deliverance.*

1 Why boastest thou thyself, thou tyrant: that thou canst do mischief;

2 Whereas the goodness of God: endureth yet daily?

3 Thy tongue imagineth wickedness: and with lies thou cuttest like a sharp razor.

4 Thou hast loved unrighteousness more than goodness: and to talk of lies more than righteousness.

5 Thou hast loved to speak all words that may do hurt: O thou false tongue.

6 Therefore shall God destroy thee for ever: he shall take thee, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling, and root thee out of the land of the living.

7 The righteous also shall see this, and fear: and shall laugh him to scorn;

8 Lo, this is the man that took not God for his strength: but trusted unto the multitude of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.

9 As for me, I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God: my trust is in the tender mercy of God for ever and ever.

10 I will always give thanks unto thee for that thou hast done: and I will hope in thy Name, for thy saints like it well.

Ver. 1. *thou tyrant:*] Thou cruel oppressor.

Ver. 2. *endureth yet daily?*] And is daily shown on my behalf and for my deliverance, so that thou canst not hurt me.

Ver. 3. *Thy tongue imagineth*] Thy tongue uttereth the thoughts and schemes of evil.

Ver. 8.] The righteous, when they fear and reverence God on account of His just vengeance, and when they laugh the wicked to scorn, shall say these words, "Lo, this is the man," &c.

Ver. 9.] I, in the house and Church of God, am like a flourishing olive-tree in the field. My cruel enemy has not been able to cut me down, nor to stop the growth of my prosperity.

It is bad enough to imagine and to do mischief; but far worse to boast of it. And yet this is very commonly the case with wicked people; they talk of their sin as if it was an honour to them; "whose glory is in their shame." *Phil.* iii. 19. But God will put down and punish all such wicked boasters, and "root them out of the land of the living," and drive them from His presence for ever into the nethermost hell. A false and deceitful tongue is dangerous and dreadful, cutting like a razor, devouring like a sword; bent upon mischief, hateful of good. How shocking a picture is this of the corrupt heart of man; how far, very far has he gone from the holy image of God, in which he was created! Man values himself for being able to do mischief, when God esteems it His glory to do good. But the true believer is not so; he desires and delights to be made like unto God: to do good to all, and evil to none. "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful;" thus will you have Him for your Protector, in all assaults of the enemy; and for your Friend at all times; and even if He suffer you at length to be cut off, it will only be—a speedy removal from earth to heaven, from suffering to glory.

QUESTIONS.

What did Doeg boast of?—Why should he not, verse 2?—The tongue *imagineth* wickedness?—With lies he cut like what?—What would God therefore do to him?—What shall the righteous do?—And what shall he say, verse 8?—What is he like?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM LIII.

Nearly the whole of this Psalm may be found in Psalm xiv. 1. 4. 8—11. *The only words of difference, which need any remark, are in ver.* 6 *of this Psalm,* "*God has broken the bones of him that besieged thee.*" *The meaning is,* "*God has greatly afflicted and punished him that beset thee,*" *O my soul, and hemmed thee round with snares. When an army goes against a town, and surrounds it, so that the people cannot escape, it is called besieging the place. Thus David was, as it were, besieged by his enemies.* See all the notes and remarks on *Psalm* xiv.

1 The foolish body hath said in his heart : there is no God.

2 Corrupt are they, and become abominable in their wickedness : there is none that doeth good.

3 God looked down from heaven upon the children of men : to see if there were any, that would understand, and seek after God.

4 But they are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become abominable : there is also none that doeth good, no, not one.

5 Are not they without understanding that work wickedness : eating up my people as if they would eat bread? they have not called upon God.

6 They were afraid where no fear was : for God hath broken the bones of him that besieged thee; thou hast put them to confusion, because God hath despised them.

7 Oh, that the salvation were given unto Israel out of Sion : Oh, that the Lord would deliver his people out of captivity!

8 Then should Jacob rejoice : and Israel should be right glad.

PSALM LIV.

David, when betrayed by the Ziphites, and surrounded by Saul and his enemies, wrote this Psalm of Prayer, trusting in God for deliverance from his great danger. 1 Sam. xxiii. 14—29. *The application to Christ, and to Christians, is*

easy: for which reason our Church has appointed this Psalm to be read on Good Friday.

1 Save me, O God, for thy Name's sake : and avenge me in thy strength.

2 Hear my prayer, O God : and hearken unto the words of my mouth.

3 For strangers are risen up against me : and tyrants, which have not God before their eyes, seek after my soul.

4 Behold, God is my helper : the Lord is with them that uphold my soul.

5 He shall reward evil unto mine enemies : destroy thou them in thy truth.

6 An offering of a free heart will I give thee, and praise thy Name, O Lord : because it is so comfortable.

7 For he hath delivered me out of all my trouble : and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.

Ver. 1. *for thy Name's sake:*] That Thy name and Thy holy cause may be glorified: that the enemy may not cast reproaches, as if Thou wert unable to deliver me.

Ver. 3. *strangers, &c.*] The Ziphites, though belonging to the same tribe as David, acted the part of "strangers," in seeking to deliver him up to his enemy. Such a part did the whole Jewish nation act towards their Saviour, Christ Jesus, when they delivered Him over to the Roman power. And the Church frequently meets with such treatment at the hands of her children, as she might expect only at the hands of "strangers to the covenant of promise."—*tyrants,*] *Psalm* lii. 1.

Ver. 5. *in thy truth.*] In fulfilment of Thy promises.

Ver. 6. *an offering*] David, strong in faith, gives thanks for his escape, as if already accomplished.—*so comfortable.*] It is the great comfort of mourners to dwell upon the mercies of God.

Ver. 7. *his desire*] Viz. the overthrow of his enemies; not because he delighted in their punishment, not from a spirit of revenge, but because they were the enemies of God, and dishonoured His holy Name.

Our nearest relations may prove more unkind than strangers: those who ought to protect us, may become our oppressors: fellow-christians, in name, may slander and revile and injure us,

more than even unbelievers do. Looking unto David betrayed by the men of Judah, looking unto Christ betrayed by His Apostle, and delivered to death by the Jewish rulers and people, "His own who received him not," *John* i. 11, what can we expect from any who "have not God before their eyes," but opposition and injustice?—But let us leave our cause with God, and we shall not want a protector and a friend. Let us dwell "comfortably" upon the many mercies we have received at His gracious hands; and pray with a firm hope for His continued favour, that He would hear and save us. O Lord, help us to bear our crosses without repining, and at length bring us to behold Thy victories and Thy glory.

QUESTIONS.

On what occasion was this Psalm written?—How may it be applied?—For thy Name's sake?—Strangers are risen up?—Tyrants?—In Thy truth?—Mine eye hath seen his desire?—Why did he desire it?

PSALM LV.

This Psalm was probably written during the rebellion of Absalom, David's son, 2 Sam. xv. *It describes the deep distress of David, and the base conduct of his nearest friends; and thus foreshows the circumstances and treatment of our blessed Lord.*

1 Hear my prayer, O God: and hide not thyself from my petition.

2 Take heed unto me, and hear me: how I mourn in my prayer, and am vexed.

3 The enemy crieth so, and the ungodly cometh on so fast: for they are minded to do me some mischief; so maliciously are they set against me.

4 My heart is disquieted within me: and the fear of death is fallen upon me.

5 Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me: and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me.

6 And I said, O that I had wings like a dove: for then would I flee away, and be at rest.

7 Lo, then would I get me away far off: and remain in the wilderness.

8 I would make haste to escape: because of the stormy wind and tempest.

9 Destroy their tongues, O Lord, and divide them: for I have spied unrighteousness and strife in the city.

10 Day and night they go about within the walls thereof: mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it.

11 Wickedness is therein: deceit and guile go not out of their streets.

12 For it is not an open enemy that hath done me this dishonour: for then I could have borne it.

13 Neither was it mine adversary, that did magnify himself against me: for then peradventure I would have hid myself from him.

14 But it was even thou, my companion: my guide, and mine own familiar friend.

15 We took sweet counsel together: and walked in the house of God as friends.

16 Let death come hastily upon them, and let them go down quick into hell: for wickedness is in their dwellings, and among them.

17 As for me, I will call upon God: and the Lord shall save me.

18 In the evening, and morning, and at noon-day will I pray, and that instantly: and he shall hear my voice.

19 It is he that hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: for there were many with me.

20 Yea, even God, that endureth for ever, shall hear me, and bring them down: for they will not turn, nor fear God.

21 He laid his hands upon such as be at peace with him: and he brake his covenant.

22 The words of his mouth were softer than butter, having war in his heart: his words were smoother than oil, and yet be they very swords.

23 O cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall nourish thee: and shall not suffer the righteous to fall for ever.

24 And as for them: thou, O God, shalt bring them into the pit of destruction.

25 The blood-thirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days: nevertheless, my trust shall be in thee, O Lord.

Ver. 2. *I mourn*] So *Hezekiah* mourned like a dove: his eyes failed with looking upward. *Isa.* xxxviii. 14.—*am vexed.*] Am troubled.

Ver. 3. *to do me some mischief;*] "The conspiracy was strong." 2 *Sam.* xv. 12.

Ver. 4, 5.] These verses describe the dreadful state of David's mind, when he went over the brook Cedron, and up mount Olivet, "weeping as he went," and expecting soon to be cut off, 2 *Sam.* xv. 23. 30. And they also describe the agony of the Son of David, when He likewise passed over the same brook, *John* xviii. 1, and when His soul was "sore amazed, and very heavy, and exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." *Mark* xiv. 33, 34.

Ver. 6. *flee away,*] He had no serious desire to leave his station and his duty; only, in these beautiful words, he breathes the feelings of weak and overpowered nature. Thus Jesus in His prayer in the garden. *Mark* xiv. 35, 36. 39.

Ver. 8. *the stormy wind*] Because of the fury and violence of mine enemies.

Ver. 9. *Destroy, &c.*] Overthrow their counsels and plots. "O Lord, I pray Thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness." 2 *Sam.* xv. 31.

Ver. 10. *they go about*] That is, unrighteousness and strife (ver. 9) go about; they are described as two persons "going about" to corrupt and inflame the people.

Ver. 12—15.] In these verses many of the black and cruel circumstances of Ahithophel's treason against David and of Judas's treason against Christ are strongly marked. —*peradventure*] Perhaps.

Ver. 16. *go down quick, &c.*] Go down *alive* into the grave: be suddenly destroyed, as if swallowed up in an earthquake, like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, *Numb.* xvi. 23—34. The verse seems to point to the sudden and violent death of Ahithophel, who "hanged himself," 2 *Sam.* xvii. 23; and of Judas, who also "went and hanged himself." *Matt.* xxvii. 5.

Ver. 17. *I will call, &c.*] Prayer is our remedy against all troubles and disorders of the soul within, and our shield against all troubles and dangers without.

Ver. 18. *In the evening, &c.*] The regular times for prayer, *Dan.* vi. 10. 13.—*instantly:*] Earnestly, urgently.

Ver. 19. *many with me.*] God and His holy angels. 2 *Kings* vi. 16, 17. *Matt.* xxvi. 53.

Ver. 21. *He,*] The person before spoken of. Ver. 12—15.

Ver. 22. *softer than butter, &c.*] How exactly does this apply to Judas, who betrayed Christ, while he said, "Hail, Master; and kissed Him!" *Matt.* xxvi. 49.

Ver. 23.] Cast thy trouble upon the Lord, O my soul; trust to Him for help, and He shall support thee; and He will never suffer the righteous to fall.

Ver. 24. *as for them:*] Namely, my wicked enemies.

Ver. 25. *half their days*:] On the contrary, length of days is promised to the righteous. *Prov.* iii. 1, 2. 16.

From disappointments and losses, from the unkindness of friends and the malice of enemies, from the weaknesses both of the body and the soul, we must expect to be disquieted. And sometimes the burden is so heavy and the prospect so dark, that we would rather leave the world at once, and fly away and be at rest. This is a very natural feeling; and well it is, when our earthly trials direct our thoughts and affections to our heavenly inheritance! But we must be patient; we must take care not to wish or pray, in an angry, hasty, or a murmuring spirit, as if we were quarrelling with our lot; we may long for our deliverance, but we must be content to wait God's time; "casting all our care upon Him, for He careth for us." 1 *Pet.* v. 7. And thus He will "deliver our souls in peace:" "for there are many with us." He is the "Lord of Hosts," only let us cleave stedfastly to Him, and not act the part of false friends; we hate the ways of those who flatter us, while they have no friendship in their hearts; then let not God be mocked with the soft and smooth words of promise and profession, when we love Him not. We are wont to abhor Judas, who betrayed his Lord with a kiss, the token of affection: we know his end: then let us beware how we, the Lord's disciples by name, betray His holy cause into the hand of the enemy, by unfaithfulness and sin: let us see that our hearts are not counselling and plotting against Him, by being full of evil thoughts and evil desires. If we betray Him, He will forsake us; if we love and serve Him faithfully, we need never fear, for we shall never fall.

QUESTIONS.

On what occasion was this Psalm written?—Am vexed?—His heart was what?—And what had fallen upon him?—What did he wish for?—And why, ver. 6?—Destroy their tongues, ver. 12—15?—Whom does David allude to?—What other character is also described?—Go down quick into hell?—Which were the Jewish times of prayer?—"There were many with me," who?—Repeat ver. 22.—Upon whom should we cast our burden?—What is meant by this expression?—What shall we gain by so doing?

THE ELEVENTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM LVI.

This Psalm is said to have been written when David was at Gath, in the hands of his heathen enemies, the Philistines, 1 Sam. xxi. 10—15. *His trust is in God, whom he resolves to praise and serve.*

1 Be merciful unto me, O God, for man goeth about to devour me: he is daily fighting, and troubling me.

2 Mine enemies are daily in hand to swallow me up: for they be many that fight against me, O thou most Highest!

3 Nevertheless, though I am sometime afraid: yet put I my trust in thee.

4 I will praise God, because of his word: I have put my trust in God, and will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

5 They daily mistake my words: all that they imagine is to do me evil.

6 They hold all together, and keep themselves close: and mark my steps when they lay wait for my soul.

7 Shall they escape for their wickedness: thou, O God, in thy displeasure shalt cast them down.

8 Thou tellest my flittings; put my tears into thy bottle: are not these things noted in thy book?

9 Whensoever I call upon thee, then shall mine enemies be put to flight: this I know; for God is on my side.

10 In God's word will I rejoice: in the Lord's word will I comfort me.

11 Yea, in God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

12 Unto thee, O God, will I pay my vows: unto thee will I give thanks.

13 For thou hast delivered my soul from death, and my feet from falling: that I may walk before God in the light of the living.

Ver. 2. *daily in hand*] *Bible Vers.* "would daily," are always endeavouring.

Ver. 4. *because of his word:*] Because of his promises, which never fail.—*what flesh can do*] What mortal man can do.

Ver. 5. *daily mistake, &c.*] They wilfully mistake my words, twisting them to a strange meaning, and turning

them against me. Thus did the enemies of Jesus. *Matt.* xxii. 15; xxvi. 61. *John* ii. 19. Many indeed have thought that the Messiah is speaking through the whole of this Psalm.

Ver. 6. *lay wait*] Lay snares for my life.

Ver. 8. *thou tellest my flittings;*] Thou knowest all my wanderings up and down, from one place to another, through fear of my enemies, ver. 1, 2. To *flit* is to fly away, to remove.—*my tears, &c.*] There was a custom with the Jews, of putting the tears of mourners into a bottle, or other small vessel, so that they might be preserved, and a remembrance of the sorrow kept up. David therefore means, that God should observe, and not forget the tears he had shed in trouble.—*noted in thy book?*] This sense is much the same, "observed and not forgotten."

Ver. 12. *pay my vows:*] He had promised and vowed, in the day of danger, to praise and serve God when he was delivered; and this undertaking he was ready to fulfil.

Ver. 13. *my soul*] My life.—*in the light, &c.*] Not going down at present to the dark chambers of the grave.

However we may be buffeted and driven about in this world, the Lord, if we trust in Him, will watch over all our wanderings, and "order all our goings" for His glory and our own good: we cannot be driven from His presence; and where He is, it is sufficient for us to be. Not a wrong do we receive, which God does not observe; not a tear of godly sorrow do we shed, that He does not mark and remember. Only let us serve Him faithfully: only let us be mindful to perform all our vows and promises. We have, perhaps, made many in sickness, in trouble, and at other times: have we kept our word? If we have, we may safely leave the rest with Him: if we have not, we cannot look for His deliverance another day. But if, by His grace, our souls are delivered from the death of sin, He will deliver our feet from falling, and bring us to heaven; to walk before Him for ever "in the light of the living;" in that "city, which hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." *Rev.* xxi. 23.

QUESTIONS.

What flesh can do unto me?—They mistake my words?—Lay wait?—My flittings?—Tears into thy bottle?—Noted in Thy book?—Will I pay my vows?—My soul?

PSALM LVII.

David escaped from Saul in the cave at Engedi, 1 Sam. xxiv. 3, ***which represents the deliverance and resurrection of our Lord from the grave. Such is the subject of this Psalm, and therefore we use it on*** Easter-day.

1 Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me; for my soul trusteth in thee: and under the shadow of thy wings shall be my refuge, until this tyranny be overpast.

2 I will call unto the most high God: even unto the God that shall perform the cause which I have in hand.

3 He shall send from heaven: and save me from the reproof of him that would eat me up.

4 God shall send forth his mercy and truth: my soul is among lions.

5 And I lie even among the children of men, that are set on fire: whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.

6 Set up thyself, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth.

7 They have laid a net for my feet, and pressed down my soul: they have digged a pit before me, and are fallen into the midst of it themselves.

8 My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing, and give praise.

9 Awake up, my glory; awake, lute and harp: I myself will awake right early.

10 I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the people: and I will sing unto thee among the nations.

11 For the greatness of thy mercy reacheth unto the heavens: and thy truth unto the clouds.

12 Set up thyself, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth.

Ver. 1. *the shadow, &c.*] *Psalm* xvii. 8.—*this tyranny*] This cruel oppression.

Ver. 2. *I will call, &c.*] David cried unto God, and was delivered out of the hands of Saul; the Son of David cried unto God, and was delivered from the power of the

grave; all the saints on earth cry unto God, and shall be delivered out of all their troubles, now, henceforth, and for ever.

Ver. 4. *among lions.*] Fierce and mighty enemies. *Psalm* xxii. 21.

Ver. 5. *set on fire:*] Among slanderers and wicked flatterers, who stir up and inflame Saul against me.—*whose teeth, &c.*] In the fourth verse David compares his enemies to lions, and here therefore he compares the weapons they used against him to the teeth of savage animals; of whatever kind those weapons might be.—*their tongue, &c.*] Their tongue cuts and maims my character, as a sharp sword does the body. How truly do these figures represent the cruel rage which the Jewish people employed against their Prince and Saviour!

Ver. 6. *Set up thyself, &c.*] God is exalted and glorified among men, by the display of mercy and judgment in the salvation of His children from the hands of their enemies. But chiefly was He exalted, when, having raised up His Son Jesus, He "set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, &c." *Eph.* i. 20, 21.

Ver. 7. *laid a net, &c.*] David compares himself, 1 *Sam.* xxvi. 20, to a bird upon the mountains, which the fowler endeavours to hunt into the nets and snares which he has laid. So was the most innocent dove, the holy Jesus, persecuted by the Jews, till they had driven Him into the snares of death, and laid Him low in the grave. But the enemies of both received, in the end, the due reward of their deeds, and "fell into the pit which they had digged." See on *Psalm* vii. 16.

Ver. 8. *My heart, &c.*] At the prospect of speedy deliverance, David, as the type of Christ, declares his heart to be fixed and settled, "stedfast and unmoveable," in the midst of trouble, even then preparing to celebrate the victory with songs of praise.

Ver. 9. *my glory;*] My tongue. See *Psalm* xvi. 10. These latter verses all apply very remarkably to the resurrection of our Lord, by which the "nations," the Gentiles, were taught to sing the praise and glory of God; and by which it was shown that His "mercy is infinite," and the "truth of His word is established for ever."

In the midst of man's hatred, we seek the Lord's love; in the midst of man's rage and cruelty, we pray for the Lord's mercy; and if we seek and pray earnestly, it will never be in vain. The Lord will certainly hear us, and interfere on our behalf; He will perform that which we cannot do; even every "cause that we have in hand," if it be for His honour and glory: He will either remove the trial, or will bring us safely through it. What He said to His apostle, He saith unto all, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." 2 *Cor.* xii. 9. The more weak and helpless we are, the more manifest it is that we are saved by the strong arm of the Lord. Let us then seek to have our hearts entirely fixed on God: let us pray for His mercy, and depend upon His promises. And remembering what He has done for our souls, let all our powers of body and mind, all we are and all we have, be heartily employed in setting forth His praise. And thus we shall at length receive His crowning mercy, even an everlasting deliverance from sin and death.

QUESTIONS.

This tyranny?—My soul is among lions?—Set on fire?—Whose teeth are spears and arrows, &c.?—Laid a net?—Digged a pit?—Upon what was David's heart fixed?—Awake up, my glory?—What is intended and represented by this deliverance of David?—On what day does the Church use this Psalm?

PSALM LVIII.

It appears that an assembly of wicked rulers, under Saul, had been sitting in judgment upon David, and passing an unjust sentence upon him: He gives their character, and rejoices in looking forward to the judgment of God.

1 Are your minds set upon righteousness, O ye congregation: and do ye judge the thing that is right, O ye sons of men?

2 Yea, ye imagine mischief in your heart upon the earth: and your hands deal with wickedness.

3 The ungodly are froward, even from their mother's womb: as soon as they are born, they go astray, and speak lies.

4 They are as venomous as the poison of a serpent: even like the deaf adder, that stoppeth her ears;

5 Which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer: charm he never so wisely.

6 Break their teeth, O God, in their mouths: smite the jaw-bones of the lions, O Lord: let them fall away like water that runneth apace; and when they shoot their arrows, let them be rooted out.

7 Let them consume away like a snail, and be like the untimely fruit of a woman: and let them not see the sun.

8 Or ever your pots be made hot with thorns: so let indignation vex him, even as a thing that is raw.

9 The righteous shall rejoice, when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his footsteps in the blood of the ungodly.

10 So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth.

Ver. 1. *O ye congregation:*] O ye assembly of judges. This reminds us of the wicked assembly of Jewish rulers, who sat and passed their cruel judgment upon Jesus, without even a *show* of justice.

Ver. 3. *froward,*] Self-willed, headstrong.—*as soon as, &c.*] From their earliest years, as soon as they are capable of falsehood.

Ver. 4. *as the poison, &c.*] They were, what the Pharisees and Sadducees were to Christ, "a generation of vipers," *Matt.* iii. 7; the brood of the old serpent, Satan, *Gen.* iii.—*the deaf adder,*] It was said that serpents of all kinds, except the adder, could be charmed by music, so as to become tame and harmless. David's enemies, therefore, were not only like serpents, but like the worst of serpents, which could never be soothed or subdued.

Ver. 6. *Break their teeth, &c.*] See on *Psalm* iii. 7.—*be rooted out.*] Either it is, "let the ungodly be rooted out," and have no power to hurt; or (as in the Bible Version) "let their arrows be cut in pieces," split so that they can do no harm.

Ver. 7. *like a snail, &c.*] Which leaves a slimy track, a part of itself, as it creeps along; and therefore wastes as it goes.—*not see the sun.*] Let them be feeble and sickly, like a plant which never sees the sun.

Ver. 8. *or ever your pots, &c.*] The *Bible Version* will help us to a much better sense of this difficult passage: "Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living and in his wrath:" and the meaning may be this: "As when a fire of thorns is kindled under a pot out of doors, a violent wind comes

and sweeps them away before the water feels any heat, so shall the Lord, in His fierce anger, hurry away the wicked before they have had time to do mischief." *Psalm* lv. 16.

Ver. 9. *shall rejoice,*] Not from any private feeling of revenge, but because of the triumph of the Lord's justice and mercy, and the success of His holy cause.—*wash his footsteps, &c.*] It means, "he shall entirely subdue the ungodly." The verse may be regarded as foreshowing the victory of "the Holy One and the Just," (*Acts* iii. 14,) Jesus Christ the righteous, over all His enemies.

Ver. 10. *there is a reward*] There is a profit in serving God; for while the wicked are cast out, the righteous are blessed and saved. This is frequently seen in the course of the Lord's dealings, even in the present life; and it will be more fully seen on the final day of judgment, when "every one shall receive the things done in his body (i. e. the *reward*, the fruit of these things) according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 *Cor.* v. 10.

While we mourn over the wickedness and the crimes of ungodly people, let us be humbly thankful, that it hath pleased our merciful Lord to "make us differ" from them. We were born with the same corrupt nature as they, inclined "to go astray and speak lies," and commit all manner of sin; but it has pleased God, by His holy word and by His Holy Spirit, to give us a love of the truth, and to "lead us in the paths of righteousness." If we are not "a seed of evil doers," children of the serpent; if we have not, "like a deaf adder," shut our ears against the law of life, we can never be thankful enough to Him who hath made us to differ. "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them." *Prov.* xx. 12. And though we know that God will dreadfully punish the wicked, and though we rejoice in the hope of our own salvation, never let the spirit of vengeance be cherished within us, but rather of pity and compassion; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." *Rom.* xii. 19. We must leave the matter entirely in God's hand, and we have proofs almost every day, that "the Judge of all the earth will do right." *Gen.* xviii. 25. We see the wicked brought to misery and shame, and the righteous comforted and honoured. And at last, on the great day, the recompense of either kind will be complete.

QUESTIONS.

O ye congregation?—What assembly did it mean?—What assembly did it foreshow?—Froward?—What do the ungodly as soon as they are born?—How venomous are they?—How like the deaf adder?—Explain ver. 6.—Like a snail?—Not see the sun?—Wash his footsteps, &c.?—So that a man shall say, what?—How shall this be seen at the last?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM LIX.

David expresses what his thoughts and affections were, when Saul sent officers to watch his house all night, and to slay him when he came out of his doors in the morning. 1 Sam. xix. 11—18.

1 Deliver me from mine enemies, O God: defend me from them that rise up against me.

2 O deliver me from the wicked doers: and save me from the blood-thirsty men.

3 For lo, they lie waiting for my soul: the mighty men are gathered against me, without any offence or fault of me, O Lord.

4 They run and prepare themselves without my fault: arise thou therefore to help me, and behold.

5 Stand up, O Lord God of hosts, thou God of Israel, to visit all the heathen: and be not merciful unto them that offend of malicious wickedness.

6 They go to and fro in the evening: they grin like a dog, and run about through the city.

7 Behold, they speak with their mouth, and swords are in their lips: for who doth hear?

8 But thou, O Lord, shalt have them in derision: and thou shalt laugh all the heathen to scorn.

9 My strength will I ascribe unto thee: for thou art the God of my refuge.

10 God showeth me his goodness plenteously: and God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies.

11 Slay them not, lest my people forget it: but scatter them abroad among the people, and put them down, O Lord, our defence.

12 For the sin of their mouth, and for the words of their lips, they shall be taken in their pride: and why? their preaching is of cursing and lies.

13 Consume them in thy

wrath, consume them, that they may perish: and know that it is God that ruleth in Jacob, and unto the ends of the world.

14 And in the evening they will return: grin like a dog, and will go about the city.

15 They will run here and there for meat: and grudge if they be not satisfied.

16 As for me, I will sing of thy power, and will praise thy mercy betimes in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.

17 Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for thou, O God, art my refuge, and my merciful God.

Ver. 3. *without any offence*] See on *Psalm* xvii. 3. Of Christ alone could this be truly said; and indeed the whole of what David says here, of himself and his blood-thirsty enemies, is more suited to his Lord.

Ver. 5. *the heathen:*] The wicked; even the Israelites, when they had forsaken God, were sometimes called heathen; though they did know God, they knew Him to no good purpose. Thus again, ver. 8.

Ver. 6. *run about*] The dogs in those countries were not confined in houses, but went about in great numbers through the streets of a city.

Ver. 7. *swords*] See on *Psalm* lvii. 5. When they speak, their words are like swords. —*for who doth hear?*] For they say, "who doth hear?" who will call us to account?

Ver. 8. *in derision:*] See on *Psalm* ii. 4.

Ver. 11. *Slay them not,*] Destroy them not all at once, lest the lesson be forgotten; but scatter them as a conquered people among their enemies, so that they may be continually reminded of their sin and shame. This is a prophecy foretelling the scattered state of the Jewish people, for their murder of the Son of God. And how is it come to pass! The Jews are divided into all lands, and have been so ever since their city was destroyed. Their condition has well been called a standing proof of the truth of God's word.

Ver. 12. *For the sin of their mouth,*] This no doubt describes the lying slanders of David's foes: but it also describes the many blasphemous speeches, uttered by the Jews against Christ; especially that dreadful one, involving their own fate, in agreement with which so many troubles

have come upon them :—"His blood be on us and on our children." *Matt.* xxvii. 25.—*their preaching*] Their speech.

Ver. 13. *Consume them,*] Another prophecy; "Thou wilt consume them," till they be no more a people.—*in Jacob,*] God is the King of His chosen race, and will defend them; and He is the King of all the nations, and will rule them as He pleases, and bring them to submission.

Ver. 14, 15.] The dogs (alluded to in ver. 6) are here represented as returning after their search for food, grinning, hungry, and howling their complaints. As his enemies were like dogs in their dispositions and ways, so should they be like them in their disappointment and distress. The punishment would be answerable to the crime.

Ver. 16. *in the morning :*] After they had watched his house through the night: thus to every night of trouble there will be a morning of deliverance; and to the night of death, a morning of resurrection.

The various judgments which have been denounced against the wicked, and which have always been executed without fail, may well serve to fill us with fear and trembling at God's displeasure, and with holy reverence for the truth of His word: and more especially, His judgments upon the wicked Jews, which were so plainly foretold many hundred years before (*Deut.* xxviii. 15—68), and so exactly fulfilled. There is scarcely a country in the present day, where there are not some scattered Jews; and they are always, more or less, shunned and despised. Thus they are like a living sermon: they preach to the world continually, that the Bible is the true word of God. But we must not exalt ourselves against them, nor say in contempt, "Thou fool" (*Matt.* v. 22), but pity and pray for them; pray that they may be brought, as we mercifully are, to the acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as "their Lord, and their God;" and to "know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom they crucified, both Lord and Christ." *Acts* ii. 36. Even so, blessed Lord, bring every enemy into submission, and every wandering sheep into thy fold!

QUESTIONS.

From whom does David pray to be delivered?—To whom would God not be merciful?—To what animal were David's wicked enemies compared?—What were in their lips?—Explain verse 8.—Slay them not, &c.?—Who were scattered abroad?—What was the sin of their mouth?—Their preaching is of cursing?—Betimes in the morning, to what does this expression refer?

PSALM LX.

When Saul and his sons were slain, the Philistines prevailed, and the Israelites were scattered. 1 Sam. xxxi. 7. *But after David had come to the throne, the tribes of Israel submitted to him, and the heathen nations were subdued.* 2 Sam. v. viii. *The Psalm relates to these events.*

1 O God, thou hast cast us out, and scattered us abroad: thou hast also been displeased; O turn thee unto us again.

2 Thou hast moved the land, and divided it: heal the sores thereof, for it shaketh.

3 Thou hast showed thy people heavy things: thou hast given us a drink of deadly wine.

4 Thou hast given a token for such as fear thee: that they may triumph because of the truth.

5 Therefore were thy beloved delivered: help me with thy right hand, and hear me.

6 God hath spoken in his holiness, I will rejoice, and divide Sichem: and mete out the valley of Succoth.

7 Gilead is mine, and Manasses is mine: Ephraim also is the strength of my head; Judah is my lawgiver;

8 Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, be thou glad of me.

9 Who will lead me into the strong city: who will bring me into Edom?

10 Hast not thou cast us out, O God: wilt not thou, O God, go out with our hosts?

11 O be thou our help in trouble: for vain is the help of man.

12 Through God will we do great acts: for it is he that shall tread down our enemies.

Ver. 2. *moved the land, &c.*] So great have been our disturbances, that it seemed as if the land itself were shaken, and made to tremble with our divisions and quarrels; as if it were full of diseases and sores. *Isa.* i. 5—7.

Ver. 3. *a drink, &c.*] We have been foolish and mad,

stupid in our rebellion, as if we had drunk wine with an intoxicating and deadly drug in it.

Ver. 4. *a token*] The banner or ensign of David under which they might range themselves and be safe. Thus Christians may flock to the banner of the *cross.* "In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and His rest (after the battle is over and the victory gained) shall be glorious." *Isa.* xi. 10.—*because of the truth.*] According to Thy true promise.

Ver. 5. *thy beloved*] Thy beloved people.

Ver. 6. *in his holiness,*] In His holy truth; He hath "sworn by Himself," *Heb.* vi. 13, and hath put His words in the mouth of me His prophet; by which I say that I will divide among my people the land of Sichem or Shechem; and will *mete,* or measure out, for their several portions, "the valley of Succoth;" which countries about Judea have already come into my possession.

Ver. 7.] *Gilead* (probably here meaning the tribe of Gad) and *Manasseh* are already mine: *Ephraim,* a very numerous and powerful tribe, "is the strength of my head," my strong guard and defence. 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 2. *Judah* is my royal counsellor, and shall help me in framing wise laws: my royal court of law shall be at Jerusalem.

Ver. 8.] The *heathen* nations also are submitting themselves: *Moab,* being ready to stoop to the lowest condition, may be called my *washpot:* over *Edom, or to* Edom, "will I cast my shoe," as a sign of her humiliation; (any office about the shoes was a mark of lowliness or servitude. *Matt.* iii. 11. *Mark* i. 7;) and the Philistines shall hail me as a conqueror.

Ver. 9. *who will lead me*] Who will put the enemies' strong holds into my possession?—*the strong city:*] Probably meaning Rabbah, the chief city of the Ammonites, which David besieged after these victories. 2 *Sam.* xi. 1.

Ver. 10.] Perhaps this may be the true meaning. "Wilt not Thou, O God, bring me into these strong places? Is it that God has utterly forsaken us, and will not go forth with our armies?" As much as to say, He has cast us off for a time; but will now receive us again, on our repentance.

When any people, or any person, has forsaken the Lord, unhappy consequences must be expected: and there is no remedy but by returning to Him in repentance and faith and prayer; beseeching Him also to return, and heal the sores and diseases which sin had made. He hath set up a token and banner, in the cross of Christ, for all who fear His name; that they may flock to it, and fight under it, and be safe from their enemies, both of body and soul; they shall have a rich inheritance in the promised land, given them without measure; they shall enter into the "heavenly country," as soon as the conflict is over. But we must remember, that we are not yet complete conquerors: the land lies before us, and awaits our exertions: we must go forth to it in the strength of the Lord; prepared for fresh temptations and trials at every step we take: we must put on "the whole armour of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." *Eph.* vi. 13. We must look to God alone for "help in trouble;" pray to Him, and trust in Him, through the all-prevailing Saviour: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." 2 *Pet.* i. 10.

QUESTIONS.

Moved the land and divided it?—Heal the sores?—Drink of deadly wine?—A token?—Because of the truth?—Spoken in His holiness?—By whom did He speak?—And what?—Mete out?—The strength of my head?—Judah is my lawgiver?—Explain ver. 8.—The strong city?—Why should we fly to God for help?

PSALM LXI.

David was banished, during Absalom's rebellion, to a great distance from Jerusalem and the tabernacle, 2 Sam. xv. 23—30, *and upon that occasion this Psalm is supposed to have been written.*

1 Hear my crying, O God: give ear unto my prayer.
2 From the ends of the earth will I call upon thee: when my heart is in heaviness.
3 O set me up upon the rock that is higher than I: for thou hast been my hope, and a strong tower for me against the enemy.
4 I will dwell in thy tabernacle for ever: and my trust shall be under the covering of thy wings.
5 For thou, O Lord, hast heard my desires: and hast

given an heritage unto those that fear thy name.

6 Thou shalt grant the king a long life : that his years may endure throughout all generations.

7 He shall dwell before God for ever : O prepare thy loving-mercy and faithfulness, that they may preserve him.

8 So will I always sing praise unto thy name : that I may daily perform my vows.

Ver. 2. *From the ends of the earth*] From beyond the land of Canaan, or from the furthermost places whithersoever I may be driven.

Ver. 3. *that is higher than I:*] That is too high and difficult for me to climb; set me in a place of safety. In the Bible Version it is, "*lead me* to the rock," by which the Psalmist may mean Mount Sion; and this agrees with ver. 4, "I will then (when so led) dwell in Thy tabernacle for ever."

Ver. 4. *of thy wings*] See *Psalm* xvii. 8.

Ver. 5. *an heritage*] An inheritance, a right of possession.

Ver. 6. *the king*] Thou shalt bless me with a long and prosperous life, and therein make me a type of the Messiah, whose kingdom, when it comes, shall have no end : thus the angel : "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." *Luke* i. 32, 33.

Ver. 8. *perform my vows.*] What I have promised when in banishment and trouble.

The greater our crosses and cares, the more we should seek comfort in God ; the more we should long for His ordinances, and take every opportunity of attending them, in order that we may obtain fresh supplies of grace and strength. Some unwise people do the very contrary to this : they plead their trials at home and in the world, as a reason why they cannot attend to spiritual duties : this shows a very unchristian state of mind and heart : it is just that state which our Lord condemned, when He said to the sister of Lazarus, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful." *Luke* x. 41, 42. As our worldly troubles increase, let us be so much the more driven to seek consolation and help

in the Lord: let it be said of us, as our Lord said of the other sister, "Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." O let us earnestly pray God to set us upon that Rock, which we can never reach by any wisdom or toil of our own—the Rock of Salvation—the Rock of eternal ages—Jesus Christ, our Almighty Lord and King. Here we shall find safe shelter from all the storms of life: the winds may blow and the waves may beat; but we shall remain unmoved and unhurt, in the mercy and faithfulness of our God; and sing praise unto His name for ever.

QUESTIONS.

From the ends of the earth?—The rock that is higher than I?—The covering of Thy wings?—An heritage?—Grant the king a long life?—Perform my vows?

THE TWELFTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM LXII.

David expresses his own faith and confidence in God, and exhorts and encourages others to trust in Him, and pour out their hearts in prayer before Him.

1 My soul truly waiteth still upon God: for of him cometh my salvation.

2 He verily is my strength and my salvation: he is my defence, so that I shall not greatly fall.

3 How long will ye imagine mischief against every man: ye shall be slain all the sort of you; yea, as a tottering wall shall ye be, and like a broken hedge.

4 Their device is only how to put him out whom God will exalt: their delight is in lies; they give good words with their mouth, but curse with their heart.

5 Nevertheless, my soul, wait thou still upon God: for my hope is in him.

6 He truly is my strength and my salvation: he is my defence, so that I shall not fall.

7 In God is my health, and my glory: the rock of my might, and in God is my trust.

8 O put your trust in him alway, ye people: pour out your hearts before Him, for God is our hope.

9 As for the children of men

they are but vanity: the children of men are deceitful upon the weights; they are altogether lighter than vanity itself.

10 O trust not in wrong and robbery, give not yourselves unto vanity: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

11 God spake once, and twice I have also heard the same; that power belongeth unto God;

12 And that thou, Lord, art merciful: for thou rewardest every man according to his work.

Ver. 2. *greatly fall.*] "Be greatly moved," *Bible Version.* See *Psalm* xxxvii. 24.

Ver. 3. *all the sort of you;*] Whoever among you is of this description, *i. e.* all of you.—*a tottering wall*] Ready to fall and easily pushed down.—*a broken hedge.*] Which is no defence.

Ver. 4. *whom God will exalt:*] The adversaries of David strove to deprive him of those honours and of that kingdom, to which God purposed to exalt him: the Scribes and Pharisees daily took counsel against Jesus with the same intent; and the great enemy of man is still throwing in the way of the Christian every hindrance and every snare which may rob him of his immortal crown.—*good words, &c.*] Hypocrisy is the character of the wicked.

Ver. 7. *my health,*] My well-being, my salvation.

Ver. 9. *deceitful upon the weights;*] Found wanting, when they come to be weighed and examined: no confidence can be placed in them.

Ver. 10. *in wrong and robbery,*] In the power or riches which the practice of such vices may procure.

Ver. 11. *once—twice*] I have *often* heard this—this is a most clear and certain truth, that the Lord is a God of power to punish, and of mercy to save, *Exod.* xxxiv. 5—7, and therefore it is in vain that the wicked look for success in their deceit and oppression; for God, who alone has the power to curse or bless, will destroy them; but He will be merciful to His faithful servants.

We ought to be able to say at all times, "My soul truly waiteth still upon God:" but especially in any time of sickness or trouble, it would be well if we were often repeating these words of resignation and hope; it might be a means of making us wait more patiently, and long more earnestly, for the Lord's

loving-kindness and grace. Every thing in life is an instrument in God's Almighty hand—an instrument of good or evil, just as He pleases to make it—of good to His servants, of evil to His enemies. We must wait for promised blessings in the path of duty; and in that path we shall be sure to find them: we must use the means which God has appointed, of prayer, and watchfulness, and diligence, and then we shall be protected and blessed, whoever may oppose us: for the Lord "rewardeth every man according to his work." Woe to them who are "weighed in the balances, and are found wanting." *Dan.* v. 27. They shall be cut off in the day of His power. "But glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good." *Rom.* ii. 10. They shall be saved in the day of His mercy.

QUESTIONS.

Why did David's soul wait still upon God?—What should His enemies be like?—In God is my health?—Deceitful upon the weights?—God spake once, and twice, &c.?—What belongeth unto God?—What besides power?—How will God reward every man

PSALM LXIII.

This very beautiful Psalm was composed when David was in the dry and barren wilderness, probably when he fled from Absalom. 2 Sam. xv. 23. 28. *It describes his longing after* God's *ordinances, and his high delight and unshaken dependence upon Him, and Him alone.*

1 O God, thou art my God: early will I seek thee.

2 My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh also longeth after thee: in a barren and dry land where no water is.

3 Thus have I looked for thee in holiness: that I might behold thy power and glory.

4 For thy loving-kindness is better than the life itself: my lips shall praise thee.

5 As long as I live will I magnify thee on this manner: and lift up my hands in thy name.

6 My soul shall be satisfied, even as it were with marrow and fatness: when my mouth praiseth thee with joyful lips.

7 Have I not remembered thee in my bed: and thought upon thee when I was waking?

8 Because thou hast been my helper: therefore under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

9 My soul hangeth upon thee: thy right hand hath upholden me.
10 These also that seek the hurt of my soul; they shall go under the earth.
11 Let them fall upon the edge of the sword: that they may be a portion for foxes.
12 But the king shall rejoice in God; all they also that swear by him shall be commended: for the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.

Ver. 1. *early*] Early in the morning: the joy of Thy service shall wake me betimes.

Ver. 2. *My soul thirsteth for thee,*] More than for any bodily refreshment or relief.—*where no water is.*] This figure shows the earnestness of his desires.

Ver. 3. *thy power and glory.*] Namely, as displayed in the ark at Thy tabernacle, from which I am banished. The *Bible Version* is, "To see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary," in Thy holy place of worship.

Ver. 4. *better than the life itself:*] Life is the dearest of all things which belong to this earth; "all that a man hath will he give for his life." *Job* ii. 4. But David found, as every true believer finds, that there is something far dearer and better than life itself,—the favour and loving-kindness of the Lord: without this, life has no true joys or comforts, even while it lasts; and without this, what will life lead to —in what will it end?

Ver. 5. *magnify*] Exalt thy glory among men.

Ver. 6. *as it were with marrow and fatness:*] Better satisfied than with the best and richest food, than with all the indulgences of the bodily appetite.

Ver. 7. *in my bed: &c.*] Before I closed my eyes, or when I could not sleep.—*when I was waking?*] My first waking thoughts were with Thee. Let every one closely follow this example of David: fall asleep with God, and wake with God.

Ver. 8. *under the shadow of thy wings*] *Psalm* xvii. 8.

Ver. 9. *My soul hangeth upon thee:*] No words can describe the comfort of having the mind in such a frame: this is a secret spring of the good man's life—of all his support and strength, of all his joyful hopes, and all his faithful obedience—his soul *hangeth* upon his God and Saviour.

Ver. 10. *shall go under the earth.*] Shall be brought to the grave, shall be destroyed.

Ver. 11. *Let them fall*] They *shall* fall.—*for foxes.*] They shall have no burial; their carcasses shall be devoured by wild beasts. Many of David's enemies did, no doubt, perish in this manner.

Ver. 12. *the king shall rejoice*] That is, I myself shall rejoice.—*that swear by him*] That swear allegiance, or faithful service to Him. But it may mean, they that swear by the Lord "shall be commended," and honoured; that swear by Him, as an object of worship and obedience. This expression was frequently used to denote His true worshippers and servants. *Deut.* vi. 13; x. 20, 21. *Isa.* lxv. 23.

The true believer is convinced that nothing in this world can satisfy the desires and cravings of an immortal soul; and he therefore expects happiness from the eternal One, as his God and portion. Though earth is not without its pleasures, they are nothing to him in comparison; nothing unless he can enjoy along with them the favour and blessing of his God. And by this means, even in the driest land, and the most barren spots in the wilderness of life, he can find a well-spring of comfort and plentiful provision for his soul. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." *Matt.* v. 6. And dear as his life is to him, these comforts and supports are "better than life itself." What indeed would his life be without them? "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" *Mark* viii. 36. And without God's mercy and loving-kindness, his soul must be lost. But he has not this fear upon him; he has found peace with God through Jesus Christ: his soul hangeth upon Him as its chief, its only good. With God he sleeps, and with God he awakes; with God he lives, and with God he hopes to die. And his whole life is a tribute of praise for such a privilege and such joy. He fears no enemies, but leaves them in the hands of the Almighty. His King, the captain of his Salvation, has conquered for him; to Him he has pledged his faith and his vows; and Him, by well-doing, he is following to glory.

QUESTIONS.

When would David seek God?—Where did his soul thirst

for God?—God's loving-kindness is better than what?—With marrow and fatness?—Where did he remember God?—And when did he think upon Him?—My soul hangeth upon Thee?—Shall go under the earth?—A portion for foxes?—The king, who?—That swear by Him?—What may we learn from this Psalm?

PSALM LXIV.

Saul and his people were continually plotting against David, and used all manner of deceit to injure and destroy him: their malice, and its consequences, are set forth in this Psalm.

1 Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from the fear of the enemy.

2 Hide me from the gathering together of the froward: and from the insurrection of wicked doers;

3 Who have whet their tongue like a sword: and shoot out their arrows, even bitter words;

4 That they may privily shoot at him that is perfect: suddenly do they hit him, and fear not.

5 They encourage themselves in mischief: and commune among themselves how they may lay snares, and say, that no man shall see them.

6 They imagine wickedness, and practise it: that they keep secret among themselves, every man in the deep of his heart.

7 But God shall suddenly shoot at them with a swift arrow: that they shall be wounded.

8 Yea, their own tongues shall make them fall: insomuch that whoso seeth them shall laugh them to scorn.

9 And all men that see it shall say, This hath God done: for they shall perceive that it is his work.

10 The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord, and put his trust in him: and all they that are true of heart shall be glad.

Ver. 2. *the froward:*] The wicked and wanton.—*insurrection*] Rebellious rising.

Ver. 3. *whet their tongue*] Make ready their tongue for slander as a sword is sharpened to wound and kill. *Psalm* lvii. 5.

Ver. 4. *him that is perfect;*] This more properly looks forward to Christ, *the just and perfect One.* The

4th, 5th, and 6th verses exactly describe the enemies of Jesus: envy and malice crucified Him, but we hear of nothing from their wicked lips, but of zeal for the law and loyalty to Cæsar; they were full of secret mischief, like the enemies of David.—*fear not.*] Fear not punishment, fear not God.

Ver. 7. *with a swift arrow:*] His vengeance shall overtake them soon and suddenly.

Ver. 8. *their own tongues*] *Psalm* lix. 12.

From the manner in which David poured forth his bitter lamentations, in Psalm after Psalm, we may imagine how grievous his trials must have been; and very thankful we ought to be, that ours is a happier lot, that we are not exposed to any such troubles or dangers. O let us beware, that, since we have no outward foes to drive us from God, we do not suffer any enemies to tempt us from Him; that we are not drawn away by an evil world, nor by any corrupt and selfish desires. Our great danger is from unseen enemies; from the wicked agents of Satan, who is the great adversary of our souls: he is "laying snares" for us every day and hour: putting evil thoughts into our minds, rousing our bad passions, enticing us to lust and anger. And often we are in much greater danger from such foes as these, than from any thing which can happen to the body: our remedy lies in watchfulness and prayer, "Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy:" and whenever we have been preserved, whenever we have got the better of a temptation, let us rejoice in the Lord, and say with humble gratitude, "This hath God done:" and so, while we thank Him for His mercy, others may be led to see and acknowledge it also, and to glorify His holy name.

QUESTIONS.

The froward?—The insurrection?—Have whet their tongue?—At whom did they privily shoot?—What did they shoot at him?—What did they not fear?—In what did they encourage themselves?—Explain verse 7.—Their own tongues make them fall; how so?—And how may this be applied?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM LXV.

The subject of this Psalm is, the praise of God for the fruits of the earth, and it was perhaps composed after the three years of famine, mentioned in 2 Sam. xxi. 1—14.

1 Thou, O God, art praised in Sion : and unto thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem.

2 Thou that hearest the prayer : unto thee shall all flesh come.

3 My misdeeds prevail against me : O be thou merciful unto our sins.

4 Blessed is the man, whom thou choosest, and receivest unto thee : he shall dwell in thy court, and shall be satisfied with the pleasures of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

5 Thou shalt show us wonderful things in thy righteousness, O God of our salvation : thou that art the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain in the broad sea.

6 Who in his strength setteth fast the mountains : and is girded about with power.

7 Who stilleth the raging of the sea : and the noise of his waves, and the madness of the people.

8 They also that dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth shall be afraid at thy tokens : thou that makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to praise thee.

9 Thou visitest the earth, and blessest it : thou makest it very plenteous.

10 The river of God is full of water : thou preparest their corn, for so thou providest for the earth.

11 Thou waterest her furrows, thou sendest rain into the little valleys thereof : thou makest it soft with the drops of rain, and blessest the increase of it.

12 Thou crownest the year with thy goodness : and thy clouds drop fatness.

13 They shall drop upon the dwellings of the wilderness : and the little hills shall rejoice on every side.

14 The folds shall be full of sheep : the valleys also shall stand so thick with corn, that they shall laugh and sing.

Ver. 1. *the vow*] The promise which we made in our distress, of worshipping and serving Thee, when we were delivered.

Ver. 2. *all flesh*] All mankind.

Ver. 3. *prevail against me :*] The number of my offences is too great for me to bear; I can have no hope but in Thy mercy. And what I say for myself, I say for my people, be Thou therefore "merciful unto our sins."

Ver. 4.] Observe how the pleasures of God's house and worship always occupy the Psalmist's thoughts!

Ver. 5. *thou that art the hope*] The only hope; they have no helper but Thee. There may be here (as also in ver. 8) an allusion to the time when God shall be acknowledged and worshipped in all nations, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." *Isaiah* xi. 9.

Ver. 6. *girded about with power.*] The attributes of God, and characters of men, are often illustrated in this manner by figures from dress. See *Luke* xii. 35. 1 *Pet.* i. 13, "Gird up the loins of your mind." *Eph.* vi. 14, &c.

Ver. 7. *and the madness of the people.*] God has the same power over the fury of His enemies, that He has over the raging of the waters.

Ver. 8. *at thy tokens :*] At the signs of Thy power.—*the outgoings of the morning and evening*] East and west, all the world. See ver. 5.

Ver. 10. *the river of God is full of water :*] The rivers of the earth are often dry, but God can give water when He pleases; as we may say, His river is always full. Those hot countries are watered by little streams, or rivulets, cut in the ground and brought from some large pool; from this custom the figure here used may be taken. A false friend is likened to a stream which fails us in the summer, when its refreshment is most required. See *Job* vi. 15, &c.

Ver. 12. *thou crownest the year*] The harvest and fruits of the earth, may be called the crown, or chief blessing, of the year; this comes from the goodness of God; and this we should feel, and thankfully remember every year.—*drop fatness.*] Their drops make the earth fat and rich and fruitful.

Ver. 13. *upon the dwellings*] These must be the dwellings or abode of cattle; it is in the Bible Version, "upon the pastures."—*the little hills shall rejoice*] Shall look

beautiful and cheerful, as if they were actually rejoicing with man.

Ver. 14. *that they shall laugh*] The rich appearance of the corn in the valleys shall be even more joyful and cheering than that of the hills. David may have intended, by all these earthly blessings, to set forth also the spiritual mercies of God to His Church, the plentiful provisions of His grace and Holy Spirit, which are so often represented in this manner. See *Isaiah* xxxv.

David foretels in this Psalm that, in due time, *all flesh* should come unto God, even the ends of the earth, and they that remain in the broad sea. This prophecy has been partly fulfilled in us; for many hundred years after David wrote, our land was a stranger to the true God: but it has long been enlightened and converted; the Gospel has been preached every where amongst us, the Bible is every where; we are a highly-favoured people. But remember, these great blessings will be of no advantage to us, unless we use them; our own good and happiness depend not upon what our country is, but upon what we ourselves are: we may be lost in the midst of the means of grace and salvation: and we *shall* be lost, unless we seek and use those means diligently. God has also given us many earthly blessings, a land of fruitfulness and plenty: but neither will these be of any advantage in the end, unless we employ them aright; unless we are thankful to God, the merciful giver of them all. Whenever we see the "year crowned with the Lord's goodness," with the corn and grass of the field, with the fruits and flowers of the garden; whenever we see the harvest spread around, then let us lift up our hearts, and pray for gratitude and love: And since God has provided for us such an abundance of spiritual food in His holy word; since He has poured out, like a river, the waters of life and salvation, O let us well remember, that "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." *Luke* xii. 48.

QUESTIONS.

All flesh come?—My misdeeds prevail?—What is God the hope of?—What does God still?—At thy tokens?—The river of God?—Thou crownest the year?—Drop fatness?—Hills rejoice?—Explain the figures laugh and sing.

PSALM LXVI.

It is not known who wrote this Psalm, nor upon what occasion it was written; but it is supposed to have been written by David, in praise of God's power and goodness, for having given him quiet possession of the throne.

1 O be joyful in God, all ye lands : sing praises unto the honour of his Name, make his praise to be glorious.

2 Say unto God, O how wonderful art thou in thy works : through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies be found liars unto thee.

3 For all the world shall worship thee : sing of thee, and praise thy Name.

4 O come hither, and behold the works of God : how wonderful he is in his doing toward the children of men.

5 He turned the sea into dry land : so that they went through the water on foot; there did we rejoice thereof.

6 He ruleth with his power for ever; his eyes behold the people : and such as will not believe shall not be able to exalt themselves.

7 O praise our God, ye people : and make the voice of his praise to be heard;

8 Who holdeth our soul in life : and suffereth not our feet to slip.

9 For thou, O God, hast proved us : thou also hast tried us, like as silver is tried.

10 Thou broughtest us into the snare : and laidest trouble upon our loins.

11 Thou sufferedst men to ride over our heads : we went through fire and water, and thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

12 I will go into thine house with burnt-offerings : and will pay thee my vows, which I promised with my lips, and spake with my mouth, when I was in trouble.

13 I will offer unto thee fat burnt-sacrifices, with the incense of rams : I will offer bullocks and goats.

14 O come hither, and hearken, all ye that fear God : and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul.

15 I called unto him with my mouth : and gave him praises with my tongue.

16 If I incline unto wickedness with mine heart : the Lord will not hear me.

17 But God hath heard me : and considered the voice of my prayer.

18 Praised be God who hath not cast out my prayer : nor turned his mercy from me.

Ver. 2. *be found liars unto thee.*] They shall not be able to perform their boastful threatenings against thy people; they shall be made to submit.

Ver. 4. *come hither, and behold*] Listen, and I will tell you what God hath done; he tells them in ver. 5.

Ver. 5. *the sea—the water*] The Red Sea, when the people of Israel were delivered from Egypt. "And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided." *Exod.* xiv. 21. Again at the river Jordan, when the people entered the land of Canaan: "For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over; as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up from before us, until we were gone over." *Josh.* iv. 23.—*did we rejoice.*] Did our fathers, our nation, rejoice.

Ver. 6. *the people:*] The nations all around, the heathen. —*as will not believe*] As will not believe and obey God.

Ver. 8. *holdeth our soul in life:*] Who hath preserved our lives in the midst of so many dangers.

Ver. 9. *hast proved us:*] Hast tried us by affliction just as silver is melted in a fiery furnace, to try whether it is good, and to purify it by taking off the scum or dross, which rises to the top.

Ver. 10. *trouble upon our loins.*] Heavy burdens. *Exod.* v. 1—19.

Ver. 11. *to ride over our heads:*] To lord it over us, as if we had been forced to carry them on our shoulders. —*through fire and water,*] Through the greatest dangers. *Isaiah* xliii. 1, 2.—*a wealthy place.*] A place of well-being, of safety and prosperity. *Exod.* iii. 8.

Ver. 12, 13.] The Psalmist worshipped God in the way then appointed, with burnt-offerings and sacrifices, and thus performed his vows, as David always did. *Psalm* xxii. 25; lvi. 12. Ours is the sacrifice of righteousness, (of a godly, righteous, and sober life,) offered through the one great Sacrifice Jesus Christ; and all our righteous vows and promises we must be thoroughly mindful to pay: God will not be mocked. *Gal.* vi. 7.

Ver. 17. *But God hath heard me:*] And thus hath shown my enemies, that I have not "inclined to wickedness," ver. 16, that my purpose was not wicked, as they

said it was; for if it had been so, God would not have heard me.

Truly we are bound to praise God as the Psalmist did, for His mercies vouchsafed to the people of old, as well as for our own deliverances: for by these mercies God preserved His people and His holy religion from the power of the enemy; and since the knowledge of the Lord has thus been handed down, from age to age, and has visited us, we therefore partake of the fruit of these great mercies: the blessings of Jehovah to Israel have become blessings to us. And He does likewise continually hold our souls in life: we are passing through "many and great dangers," seen or unseen, every day of our lives: and it is the Lord alone, who defendeth and preserveth us "from all accidents which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul." O let us praise Him, let us be lifting up our hearts to Him all the day long: let us give Him the service which is due unto His name; the service we have many times promised. He has heard our prayer, and let Him hear our praise: and so we may look for His help in every time of trouble, and humbly trust that He will mercifully hear us again. But God will reject the prayers of those whose heart is not right with Him; who repent not, love not, obey not. There must be no double-dealing with Jehovah: "We know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth His will, him He heareth." *John* ix. 31.

QUESTIONS.

Be found liars unto Thee?—"Behold the works of God;" what works?—Into what did He turn the sea?—When?—And why?—When besides did He divide the waters?—Holdeth our soul in life?—Has proved us, like as silver, &c.?—Trouble upon our loins?—To ride over our heads?—What did the Psalmist resolve to do?—In what case would the Lord not hear Him?—What did God's hearing him show?

PSALM LXVII.

This Psalm may be considered as a prayer *that the knowledge of the true God might be spread to all the nations of the earth, and likewise as* foretelling *that this would actually take place by the preaching of the Gospel. And, in this view, it is very appropriate as used after the second lesson at Evening Service. It is also used in the Marriage Service.*

1 God be merciful unto us, and bless us : and show us the light of his countenance, and be merciful unto us ;

2 That thy way may be known upon earth : thy saving health among all nations.

3 Let the people praise thee, O God : yea, let all the people praise thee.

4 O let the nations rejoice and be glad : for thou shalt judge the folk righteously, and govern the nations upon earth.

5 Let the people praise thee, O God : let all the people praise thee.

6 Then shall the earth bring forth her increase : and God, even our own God, shall give us his blessing.

7 God shall bless us : and all the ends of the world shall fear him.

Ver. 1. *the light of his countenance,*] His favour and blessing. *Psalm* iv. 7.

Ver. 2. *thy saving health*] Thy salvation.

Ver. 4. *the folk*] The people. The prophet Isaiah frequently speaks of the Gospel, as a means of ministering and establishing true judgment. *Isa.* ix. 7 ; xxviii. 6. 17 ; xlii. 1—4.

Ver. 6. *bring forth her increase :*] Earthly prosperity and plenty were promised to the people who would fear and serve God ; and this was a sign, or emblem, of spiritual blessings, of the increase of believers, who should be "fruitful in every good word and work," when the nations were converted to the faith of the Gospel.

Ver. 7. *all the ends of the world*] The most distant countries and islands.

Every one who is sensible of God's mercy in having given him the blessed Gospel, will heartily desire and pray, that this

mercy may be spread to all, far and near; and for this great blessing we do pray, as often as we say, in the words of our Lord, "Thy kingdom come:" and accordingly we are bound to use our best endeavours in this good and glorious cause. The knowledge of grace and salvation, which God has given us, we should diligently give to others, as opportunity serves; in our own families at least, and amidst our friends and neighbours, we may often do much; the very poorest may thus render great and good service to the Gospel. And all may have the benefit of our prayers, "all sorts and conditions of men," the proud heathen, the blinded Jew, the heedless hard-hearted sinner; that God will be pleased to "make His ways known unto them;" and to turn their hearts, that they may be saved together with us. And let us beseech the Lord to add yet this to all His other mercies, that we may have grace to be thankful, and to serve Him in holy fear and holy love; that so He may be "our own God:" let us beseech Him to "put His laws into our minds, and write them in our hearts, and He will be to us a God, and we shall be to Him a people." *Heb.* viii. 10.

QUESTIONS.

What is the subject of this Psalm?—The light of His countenance?—Thy saving health?—Judge the folk?—How?—And when?—What other prophet speaks of judgment under the Gospel?—Bring forth her increase?—How will God be known as our own God?—What will He give us?

THE THIRTEENTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM LXVIII.

This very difficult Psalm is thought to have been written on the removal of the ark to mount Sion, 2 Sam. vi. 1 Chron. xiii. *Certainly it* alludes *to that joyful occasion. It sets forth the great deliverances afforded to Israel, and the triumph over their enemies; and* in this, *it looks forward to the Gospel, to the resurrection and ascension of Christ, together with the gifts and power of the Holy Spirit; hence our Church uses the Psalm on* Whit-Sunday.

1 Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him.

2 Like as the smoke vanisheth, so shalt thou drive them away: and like as wax melteth at the fire, so let the ungodly perish at the presence of God.

3 But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God: let them also be merry and joyful.

4 O sing unto God, and sing praises unto his name: magnify him that rideth upon the heavens, as it were upon an horse; praise him in his name JAH, and rejoice before him.

5 He is a Father of the fatherless, and defendeth the cause of the widows: even God in his holy habitation.

6 He is the God that maketh men to be of one mind in an house, and bringeth the prisoners out of captivity: but letteth the runagates continue in scarceness.

7 O God, when thou wentest forth before the people: when thou wentest through the wilderness,

8 The earth shook, and the heavens dropped at the presence of God: even as Sinai also was moved at the presence of God, who is the God of Israel.

9 Thou, O God, sentest a gracious rain upon thine inheritance: and refreshedst it when it was weary.

10 Thy congregation shall dwell therein: for thou, O God, hast of thy goodness prepared for the poor.

11 The Lord gave the word: great was the company of the preachers.

12 Kings with their armies did flee, and were discomfited: and they of the household divided the spoil.

13 Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove: that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold.

14 When the Almighty scattered kings for their sake: then were they as white as snow in Salmon.

15 As the hill of Basan, so is God's hill: even an high hill, as the hill of Basan.

16 Why hop ye so, ye high hills? this is God's hill, in the which it pleaseth him to dwell: yea, the Lord will abide in it for ever.

17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: and the Lord is among them, as in the holy place of Sinai.

18 Thou art gone up on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men: yea, even for thine enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

19 Praised be the Lord daily: even the God who helpeth us, and poureth his benefits upon us.

20 He is our God, even the God of whom cometh salvation: God is the Lord, by whom we escape death.

21 God shall wound the head of his enemies: and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his wickedness.

22 The Lord hath said, I will

bring my people again, as I did from Basan : mine own will I bring again, as I did sometime from the deep of the sea.

23 That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies : and that the tongue of thy dogs may be red through the same.

24 It is well seen, O God, how thou goest : how thou, my God and King, goest in the sanctuary.

25 The singers go before, the minstrels follow after : in the midst are the damsels playing with the timbrels.

26 Give thanks, O Israel, unto God the Lord in the congregations : from the ground of the heart.

27 There is little Benjamin their ruler, and the princes of Judah their counsel : the princes of Zabulon, and the princes of Nephthali.

28 Thy God hath sent forth strength for thee : stablish the thing, O God, that thou hast wrought in us.

29 For thy temple's sake at Jerusalem : so shall kings bring presents unto thee.

30 When the company of the spearmen, and multitude of the mighty are scattered abroad among the beasts of the people, so that they humbly bring pieces of silver : and when he hath scattered the people that delight in war ;

31 Then shall the princes come out of Egypt : the Morians' land shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.

32 Sing unto God, O ye kingdoms of the earth : O sing praises unto the Lord ;

33 Who sitteth in the heavens over all from the beginning : lo, he doth send out his voice, yea, and that a mighty voice.

34 Ascribe ye the power to God over Israel : his worship and strength is in the clouds.

35 O God, wonderful art thou in thy holy places : even the God of Israel ; he will give strength and power unto his people ; blessed be God.

Ver. 1. *Let God arise, &c.*] These were the words used by Moses, whenever the ark set forward before the armies of Israel, in their way to Canaan. *Numb.* x. 35.

Ver. 2. *them*] Thine enemies.—*let the ungodly perish*] This corresponds to *Thou shalt drive them ;* and only shows the certainty of judgment coming upon those that oppose God.

Ver. 4. *his name JAH,*] This name is of much the same meaning as JEHOVAH, and it signifies THE BEING ; Him who has a being of Himself, and not given Him by another : It is often joined with another word, HALLELU, making HALLELUJAH, which is "praise Jehovah." And

"as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." *John* v. 26. And thus are they each described, *Rev.* i. 4—8, as He "which is, and which was, and which is to come," as THE BEING from all eternity to all eternity.

Ver. 5. *a Father of the fatherless, &c.*] The same God, who is so great and glorious, is also full of tender mercy and love.—*in his holy habitation.*] In the ark, from which he showed His presence and favour; just as the glory of the Godhead resided and was seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

Ver. 6. *to be of one mind*] In the *Bible Version* it is "God setteth the solitary (the lonely) in families." He giveth them that are cast out a house and family to dwell in. So He taketh repentant sinners into His spiritual and heavenly family, delivering them from the chains and captivity of Satan.—*the runagates*] The wicked who rebel against God, and wander from His way.

Ver. 7. *when thou wentest forth*] In a pillar of a cloud by day, and of fire by night. *Exod.* xiii. 21.

Ver. 8. *the heavens dropped*] The clouds dropped rain. —*Sinai*] *Exod.* xix. 16—20. This grand event, of the giving of the law, was celebrated at the feast of Pentecost, on which day also we celebrate the coming down of the Holy Spirit for the giving of a new law of righteousness and truth.

Ver. 9. *a gracious rain upon thine inheritance:*] Manna upon Thy people, as plentiful as rain; and flesh also, *Psalm* lxxviii. 25. 28. *Exod.* xvi. 13—36; an emblem of spiritual food. *Rev.* ii. 17. But some think it means only, "Thou didst send them plentiful showers in their thirsty place."

Ver. 10. *Thy congregation shall dwell therein:*] Thy people dwelt in the wilderness, ver. 7.—*prepared for the poor.*] Provided for Thy poor helpless servants in the desert.

Ver. 11. *The Lord gave the word:*] The order to the Israelites, that they should go forth and conquer Canaan; "and great was the company," or number, of those who published and spread this word of command, and this pro-

mise of victory. This foreshowed the preaching of the Gospel after the resurrection of Christ; the order to the apostles and others, and the promise of success: "go ye into all the world," &c. *Mark* xvi. 15—20. And many truly have been the preachers.

Ver. 12. *were discomfited:*] Were defeated and destroyed. See the book of Joshua, especially chap. x. xi. xii.—*they of the household*] They who stayed at home, namely the women, divided amongst them the spoil, such things as their husbands, or children, or brothers, had taken in battle and brought home. See *Judges* v. 28—30. This was a sign of the victory that should be won, under the Gospel, over the great ones of this world and all their mighty host, over Satan and his wicked agents. *Luke* x. 18, and xi. 21, 22. *Phil.* ii. 10, 11.

Ver. 13. *among the pots,*] Though ye did once lodge among the smoky furnaces of Egypt, and were covered with dirt when making bricks and pots, *Exod.* v., ye shall now be clean; and be compared to a beautiful white dove, with some of her feathers shining like gold: that is, ye shall be raised from your former wretchedness to happiness and honour. Thus was the Church of Christ cleansed and glorified. *Eph.* v. 26, 27.

Ver. 14. *as snow in Salmon.*] Ye shall be made so glorious, as to be compared not only to a white dove, ver. 13, but even to the pure snow on the top of Mount Salmon.

Ver. 15. *God's hill:*] Mount Sion; this is as much greater than other mountains in honour, as Bashan (or Basan) exceeds them in height. *Psalm* xxii. 12.

Ver. 16. *Why hop ye*] Why are ye so moved with pride and envy at God's favour to the hill of Sion? The high hills signify the proud people: "why, O ye great nations, are ye envious against Israel, whom God hath chosen?"

Ver. 17. *The chariots of God*] Do ye trust in your chariots of war, O ye people? What are they to the chariots of God? That is, what is your strength, when compared with His? He has "thousands of angels," which are more powerful than all the chariots in the

world. And thus is the Son of God attended. *Matt.* xxv. 31; xxvi. 53. *Rev.* v. 11.—*as in the holy place of Sinai.*] *Exod.* xix. 16—24.

Ver. 18. *Thou art gone up on high,*] In the ark to Mount Sion.—*hast led captivity captive,*] Hast put an end to the bondage of thy people; hast made prisoners of their conquerors, who kept them in chains.—*and received gifts for men:*] Many goods and treasures taken in war, which were afterwards used for Thy temple and people, 2 *Sam.* viii. 9—11. 1 *Chron.* xxvi. 27; that is, for the benefit of Thy true religion, by which "even Thine enemies," even they who have rebelled against Thee, might be profited. St. Paul expressly applies this verse to the ascension of Christ, *Eph.* iv. 8. He conquered the great enemy of His people, who held them captive; He received gifts, and gave them to men, the gifts of the Holy Spirit; even to those who had been His enemies, that "He might dwell in their hearts by faith." *Eph.* iii. 17.

Ver. 20. *by whom we escape death.*] He is the Lord of life and death, by whom we have been delivered, "having the keys of hell and of death." *Rev.* i. 18.

Ver. 21. *the hairy scalp*] The head; that part which is covered with hair.

Ver. 22. *I will bring my people*] 2 *Sam.* iii. 18.—*from Basan:*] *Numb.* xxi. 33—35.—*from the deep of the sea.*] *Exod.* xiv. 21—31.

Ver. 23. *that thy foot, &c.*] That thou mayest gain a complete victory, which is commonly attended with much bloodshed.—*the tongue of thy dogs, &c.*] This was particularly threatened and fulfilled in the case of wicked Ahab. 1 *Kings* xxi. 19.

Ver. 24. *how thou goest:*] How Thou hast gone up with the ark—with what triumph, with what a grand procession, Thou hast entered the holy place.

Ver. 25. *the minstrels*] Those who play on instruments of music. 2 *Sam.* vi. 5. Thus shall the Redeemed of Christ sing a glorious song. *Rev.* xix. 1.

Ver. 27.] All the tribes agree together, Benjamin and Judah who live nearest to the city, and Zebulon and Nephthali who live farthest from it; and all that lie

between them. Saul, the first "ruler" or king, was of the tribe of Benjamin. But after David became king, Judah was the royal tribe, from which law and "counsel" proceeded. *Psalm* lx. 7.

Ver. 28. *stablish*] Strengthen, make sure.

Ver. 29. *For thy temple's sake*] Where is now thy tabernacle, shall be thy temple; to which many presents were brought, 2 *Sam.* viii. 9—11. 1 *Kings* x. 24, 25. And thus also to Christ, *Matt.* ii. 11. *Rev.* xxi. 24.

Ver. 30. *the spearmen,—the mighty*] Who oppose the counsels of God.—*the beasts of the people,*] The powerful and violent ones, denoted by beasts, as in *Psalm* xxii. 12, 13. In the *Bible Version* it is, "Rebuke the company of spearmen, the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people."—*bring pieces of silver:*] To pay tribute, as a token of submission.

Ver. 31. *the Morians' land*] The country about Egypt. —*stretch out her hands*] In prayer and supplication. *Psalm* xliv. 21. The verse is a prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles. See *Isaiah* xlv. 14.

Ver. 33. *his voice,*] His thunder. *Psalm* xxix. 3.

Ver. 34. *his worship, &c.*] God is honoured in the clouds, and there shows forth His strength. The same glory is ascribed to the Lamb, *Rev.* v. 12, 13.

Ver. 35. *wonderful, &c.*] Wonderful is the power and goodness shown from Thy mercy-seat in the ark, now taken to the tabernacle; an emblem of the wonderful works of Christ upon earth and in heaven. *Rev.* xv. 3.

God has always protected and delivered the people who trusted in Him; He may suffer them to be in bondage and reproach for a season, in order to humble, to purify, and to prove them: but let them look to Him, and He will break off their chains; He will put away their vile garments, and clothe them with the beautiful garments of righteousness and salvation; He will lead them forth to liberty, to victory, and to eternal glory; He goes before them, and they are made willing to follow: Heaven and earth concur in supplying their wants and promoting their good. Jesus, their mighty Redeemer, has ascended up on high, and sitteth on His throne of mercy:

there He pleads for them, and thence He sends down His Holy Spirit, and His holy angels, and His manifold gifts of grace, to give them "all things that be needful both for their souls and bodies." To this gracious and almighty Lord let us look every day for help and blessing! O that the hearts of all His people were united as the heart of one man, in earnestness and prayer for one another's good! O that we may, more and more, pour out our supplications together, so that we may together "show forth the praises of Him, who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light," 1 *Pet.* ii. 9; and have reason to say, "Blessed be God."

QUESTIONS.

Let God arise, &c. by whom were these words used?—And on what occasion?—"His name JAH;" what does that mean?—Runagates?—How did God go forth before the people of Israel in the wilderness?—The heavens dropped?—A gracious rain?—"The Lord gave the word," for what?—The preachers?—Discomfited?—They of the household?—Divided the spoil?—Lien among the pots?—As the wings of a dove?—When were they as white as snow in Salmon?—Why hop ye so, ye high hills?—Which was God's hill?—Why so called?—Explain ver. 17.—And ver. 18.—The hairy scalp?—Explain ver. 23.—O God, how thou goest?—The minstrels?—Explain ver. 27.—Stablish?—"Kings bring presents;" what did they bring?—Beasts of the people?—The Morians' land?—Stretch out her hands?—Doth send out his voice?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM LXIX.

Composed by David in some season of great distress and danger: but still more fully describing the sufferings of Christ, to whom alone many of the expressions properly belong. It is therefore one of the Psalms for Good Friday.

1 Save me, O God: for the waters are come in, even unto my soul.

2 I stick fast in the deep mire, where no ground is: I am come into deep waters, so that the floods run over me.

3 I am weary of crying; my

throat is dry : my sight faileth me for waiting so long upon my God.

4 They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head : they that are mine enemies, and would destroy me guiltless, are mighty.

5 I paid them the things that I never took : God, thou knowest my simpleness, and my faults are not hid from thee.

6 Let not them that trust in thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my cause : let not those that seek thee be confounded through me, O Lord God of Israel.

7 And why? for thy sake have I suffered reproof : shame hath covered my face.

8 I am become a stranger unto my brethren : even an alien unto my mother's children.

9 For the zeal of thine house hath even eaten me : and the rebukes of them that rebuked thee are fallen upon me.

10 I wept, and chastened myself with fasting : and that was turned to my reproof.

11 I put on sackcloth also : and they jested upon me.

12 They that sit in the gate speak against me : and the drunkards made songs upon me.

13 But, Lord, I make my prayer unto thee : in an acceptable time.

14 Hear me, O God, in the multitude of thy mercy : even in the truth of thy salvation.

15 Take me out of the mire, that I sink not : O let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.

16 Let not the water-flood drown me, neither let the deep swallow me up : and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

17 Hear me, O Lord, for thy loving-kindness is comfortable : turn thee unto me, according to the multitude of thy mercies.

18 And hide not thy face from thy servant, for I am in trouble : O haste thee, and hear me.

19 Draw nigh unto my soul, and save it : O deliver me, because of mine enemies.

20 Thou hast known my reproof, my shame, and my dishonour : mine adversaries are all in thy sight.

21 Thy rebuke hath broken my heart; I am full of heaviness : I looked for some to have pity on me, but there was no man, neither found I any to comfort me.

22 They gave me gall to eat : and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink.

23 Let their table be made a snare to take themselves withal : and let the things that should have been for their wealth be unto them an occasion of falling.

24 Let their eyes be blinded, that they see not : and ever bow thou down their backs.

25 Pour out thine indignation upon them : and let thy wrathful displeasure take hold of them.

26 Let their habitation be

void : and no man to dwell in their tents.

27 For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten : and they talk how they may vex them whom thou hast wounded.

28 Let them fall from one wickedness to another : and not come into thy righteousness.

29 Let them be wiped out of the book of the living : and not be written among the righteous.

30 As for me, when I am poor and in heaviness : thy help, O God, shall lift me up.

31 I will praise the name of God with a song : and magnify it with thanksgiving.

32 This also shall please the Lord : better than a bullock that hath horns and hoofs.

33 The humble shall consider this, and be glad : seek ye after God, and your soul shall live.

34 For the Lord heareth the poor : and despiseth not his prisoners.

35 Let heaven and earth praise him : the sea, and all that moveth therein.

36 For God will save Sion, and build the cities of Judah : that men may dwell there, and have it in possession.

37 The posterity also of his servants shall inherit it : and they that love his name shall dwell therein.

Ver. 1. *the waters*] Of trouble and misery, *Psalm* xviii. 3. 16.

Ver. 2. *deep mire,—deep waters,*] Here and in ver. 15, 16, there seems to be an allusion to the places in which prisoners were often confined; namely, in a deep pit, with mire and dirt at the bottom, and often with water. See *Jerem.* xxxviii. 6. It is a figure to signify the greatest distress of body and mind.

Ver. 3. *weary of crying ;*] *Heb.* v. 7.—*my throat is dry :*] *John* xix. 28. Every one who knows any thing of the history of Jesus, will perceive how these expressions, and many others in the Psalm, apply to Him.

Ver. 4. *without a cause*] *Psalm* vii. 3—5. *John* xv. 25. Numberless were the enemies of the Son of David; the Jews, the Romans, the spirits of darkness.

Ver. 5. *I paid them, &c.*] So Christ suffered for sins He had not committed, *Isaiah* liii. 5 ; "the just for the unjust," 1 *Pet.* iii. 18 ; and restored honour to God's law, which He had never broken, 1 *Pet.* ii. 22.—*my faults are not hid*] David is declaring his innocence of any crimes that were laid to his charge; and he appeals to God for the truth of what he says : "Thou, O God, knowest the simpleness and foolishness which is at any time in my heart ;

Thou knowest all my faults; and thou dost know, that I am innocent." See on *Psalm* vii. 1—9.

Ver. 6.] Strengthen, O Lord, and comfort those who are true to Thee and to Thy cause!

Ver. 7. *reproof:*] Reproach and scorn.

Ver. 8.] See on *Psalm* xxxi. 13.—*my mother's children.*] My own brethren. See *Psalm* l. 20.

Ver. 9. *the zeal, &c.*] My zeal for Thy house is so great, my concern so great for Thy worship and service, that I am almost inwardly consumed by it, when I behold the sins of wicked men; they fill me with indignation and grief. The disciples applied these words to Jesus, when He cast the Jewish traders out of the temple. *John* ii. 17. And the latter part of the verse is thus quoted by St. Paul, "Even Christ pleased not Himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on me." *Rom.* xv. 3.

Ver. 11. *sackcloth*] *Psalm* xxxv. 13.

Ver. 12. *They that sit in the gate*] Either the judges and chief rulers, who held their sittings in a court near the gate; or the foolish and idle people, who used to assemble at the gate and sit there.

Ver. 14. *in the truth of thy salvation.*] According to Thy word, and promise of salvation.

Ver. 15, 16.] See on ver. 2.

Ver. 21. *there was no man,*] See on *Psalm* xxxi. 10—15.

Ver. 22.] These words, which were probably true of David only by a figure, were literally true of Christ, when they gave Him to drink vinegar "mingled with gall." *Matt.* xxvii. 34. *John* xix. 29. Vinegar, we know, is sharp, and gall is bitter; and they are intended to show the sharp and bitter sufferings endured by Christ, in order that we might drink of the "*cup of salvation.*"

Ver. 23—29. *Let, &c.*] All these verses are intended to foreshow the punishments which were falling upon David's enemies, and the still greater punishments which should fall on the enemies of Christ. David is not to be understood as praying for these things from his own private feelings, but as declaring that they would certainly happen. "It shall be so," or "Be it so," according to Thy word,

O Lord: since they will not repent, let thy judgment take its course.

Ver. 23. *their table*] Their feasting and prosperity.—*their wealth*] Their welfare. What was meant for their good, would be made, by their corrupting it, an instrument of evil.

Ver. 24. *their eyes be blinded,*] How remarkable a description of that Jewish people who "loved darkness rather than light," and still "walked on in darkness," while "the blind led the blind!" Thus Isaiah prophesied of the same people, chap. vi. 9, 10; and St. Paul has assured us, that this verse and the 23rd represent the state of the Jews under the Gospel. *Rom.* xi. 9, 10.—*bow thou down their backs.*] Let them be in a low condition, as if their backs were bowed down with a heavy burden.

Ver. 26. *Let their habitation be void:*] Let their dwellings be empty and lie waste. Thus said our Lord to the Jews, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." *Matt.* xxiii. 38. Accordingly, Jerusalem was utterly destroyed by the Romans, and the Jews have never dwelt in it since that day. But this verse is also applied to Judas, *Acts* i. 20, "who was guide to them that took Jesus," *Acts* i. 16, and therefore was the first to suffer, and leave his place empty.

Ver. 28. *from one wickedness to another:*] The Jews, in continuing to oppose Christ and His Gospel, "added sin to sin," *Isa.* xxx. 1, and have never come into "the righteousness of God by faith" in Jesus Christ. *Rom.* ix. 30—33.

Ver. 29. *wiped out of the book*] It was customary in some cities, to write the names of those who belonged to them in a book; and when, by any misbehaviour, a person lost his right and privilege, his name was blotted out. So the Jews are described as being blotted out of the register, in which the people of God are enrolled. And thus also others may be blotted out. *Rev.* iii. 5.

Ver. 32. *better than a bullock, &c.*] Better than the best sacrifice which can be offered.

Ver. 34. *his prisoners.*] Those who are in bondage for His sake.

Ver. 37. *The posterity*] The children's children, from

age to age. And thus the Church of Christ, the spiritual Sion, shall be an everlasting habitation for the faithful.

We are frequently reminded in the Psalms, and we cannot be reminded too often, of the dreadful sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, "for us men and our salvation:" to dwell upon them as we ought to do, would be the best means of bringing us to a proper sense of sin, and to make us feel how deeply we are indebted to that merciful Redeemer, who "hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows," who "was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities." *Isa.* liii. 4, 5. Consider who He was, what He suffered, why He suffered: He was Jehovah, "God manifest in the flesh." 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. He took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the "likeness of men." *Phil.* ii. 7. He was "hated without a cause;" rejected, reviled, persecuted; condemned, buffeted, tortured; betrayed, denied, forsaken by disciples; nailed to the cross, mocked there, when athirst, by the offer of vinegar mingled with gall: "giving up the ghost:" in all this, and with agony not to be told, He bore the wrath of God: and why?—for us sinners; to bring us to God and to heaven; that we "by His stripes might be healed." *Isa.* liii. 5. 1 *Pet.* ii. 24. Surely, then, if we have any feeling at all for benefits bestowed, if we have any regard at all for our own interests, we shall love the Saviour with all our heart for His unspeakable goodness in suffering and dying for us. And they who do not love Him, have reason to fear. Take warning from the Jews! See how the wrath of God is resting upon them, according to His word: His word can never fail: they must have judgment, who will not have mercy. O that we may "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," and love and serve Him unto death; so that our names, being written in the Lamb's book of life, may never be blotted out!

QUESTIONS.

The waters are come in?—In the deep mire, &c.?—Explain ver. 5.—The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me?—Sackcloth?—They that sit in the gate?—In the truth of Thy salvation?—They gave me gall, &c.; what does that mean?—And to whom must it be applied?—Explain ver. 23.—Let their eyes be blinded, &c.?—Let their habitation be void?—The book of the living?—Better than a bullock, &c.?—The posterity?—What do we learn from this Psalm?

PSALM LXX.

This Psalm is very nearly the same as the few last verses of the Fortieth. See therefore Psalm xl. 16—21.

1 Haste thee, O God, to deliver me: make haste to help me, O Lord.

2 Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul: let them be turned backward, and put to confusion, that wish me evil.

3 Let them for their reward be soon brought to shame: that cry over me, There, there.

4 But let all those that seek thee be joyful and glad in thee: and let all such as delight in thy salvation say alway, The Lord be praised.

5 As for me, I am poor and in misery: haste thee unto me, O God.

6 Thou art my helper, and my redeemer: O Lord, make no long tarrying.

THE FOURTEENTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM LXXI.

This Psalm is supposed to have been written by David during Absalom's rebellion, 2 Sam. xvii. 1—4. 17—21, *when he was beginning to grow old, and had much trouble. He praises God for past mercies, and puts his whole trust in Him. We use it in the service for the* Visitation of the Sick.

1 In thee, O Lord, have I put my trust, let me never be put to confusion: but rid me, and deliver me, in thy righteousness; incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

2 Be thou my strong hold, whereunto I may alway resort: thou hast promised to help me, for thou art my house of defence, and my castle.

3 Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the ungodly: out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

4 For thou, O Lord God, art the thing that I long for: thou art my hope, even from my youth.

5 Through thee have I been holden up ever since I was born: thou art he that took

me out of my mother's womb : my praise shall be always of thee.

6 I am become as it were a monster unto many : but my sure trust is in thee.

7 O let my mouth be filled with thy praise : that I may sing of thy glory and honour all the day long.

8 Cast me not away in the time of age : forsake me not when my strength faileth me.

9 For mine enemies speak against me, and they that lay wait for my soul take their counsel together, saying : God hath forsaken him; persecute him, and take him, for there is none to deliver him.

10 Go not far from me, O God : my God, haste thee to help me.

11 Let them be confounded and perish that are against my soul : let them be covered with shame and dishonour that seek to do me evil.

12 As for me, I will patiently abide alway : and will praise thee more and more.

13 My mouth shall daily speak of thy righteousness and salvation : for I know no end thereof.

14 I will go forth in the strength of the Lord God : and will make mention of thy righteousness only.

15 Thou, O God, hast taught me from my youth up until now : therefore will I tell of thy wondrous works.

16 Forsake me not, O God, in mine old age, when I am grey-headed : until I have showed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to all them that are yet for to come.

17 Thy righteousness, O God, is very high : and great things are they that thou hast done; O God, who is like unto thee?

18 O what great troubles and adversities hast thou showed me! and yet didst thou turn and refresh me : yea, and broughtest me from the deep of the earth again.

19 Thou hast brought me to great honour : and comforted me on every side.

20 Therefore will I praise thee and thy faithfulness, O God, playing upon an instrument of music : unto thee will I sing upon the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel.

21 My lips will be fain when I sing unto thee : and so will my soul whom thou hast delivered.

22 My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long : for they are confounded and brought unto shame that seek to do me evil.

Ver. 1. *in thy righteousness ;*] According to Thy righteous dealing to Thy servants : God is "faithful and just" to forgive and bless His penitent and obedient people, according to His word. 1 *John* i. 9.

Ver. 6. *a monster*] A great wonder: pointed at as a man of wretchedness; as one under God's displeasure for

my sin: as a warning to others. Thus did the Son of David become a "sign that was spoken against." *Luke* ii. 34.

Ver. 7. *thy praise:*] While I am scorned as Thine enemy, let me sing praises as Thy servant and friend.

Ver. 9. *none to deliver him.*] So said the wicked Jews of Christ upon the cross. *Matt.* xxvii. 42, 43.

Ver. 14. *in the strength*] Though weak in himself, he was "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." *Eph.* vi. 10. See also 2 *Cor.* xii. 9.—*make mention of thy righteousness only.*] Depend entirely upon Thy providence and protection, according to the righteous performance of Thy promise in delivering Thy people.

Ver. 16. *them that are yet for to come.*] "Every one that is to come." *Bible Version.*

Ver. 17. *is very high:*] Thy righteous purposes and plans are too high to be seen by man, too great and wonderful for me to understand.

Ver. 18. *from the deep of the earth*] From the lowest state of misery. But this figure may contain an allusion to the resurrection of our Lord and all His followers.

Ver. 21. *will be fain*] "Shall greatly rejoice." *Bible Version.*

The promises of salvation are made to those who give up all confidence in the world and in themselves, and "trust" in God alone. For this reason, David so often begins his prayer with declaring his stedfast faith, which is to the soul in affliction what an anchor is to a ship in distress, keeping it in safety. And happy are they, who have laid hold on this anchor; they need not fear any of the storms of life; they have a sure refuge always at hand. Especially happy are they, who put their trust in the Lord "from their youth up;" who live in the faith and fear of God all their lives long. Should they be cut off, as so many are, when young, they will be removed, from this troublesome world, to a land of perfect peace and perfect beauty; transplanted, as flowers in the bud, to bloom and ripen in Paradise. And should they live to be old, their grey hairs will be honourable; and they will be blessed with solid comfort and satisfaction, in looking back upon the years in which they have walked with God, through the grace of His Holy Spirit. It is a sad thing to be looking for religion in old age, when we

ought to be enjoying the comforts of it—to be sowing, when we ought to be reaping. O come to God, ye young people, without delay; or you may never come at all! The world will tempt and court you; but believe it not: it is a wicked flatterer, full of deceit; promising pleasure, but ending in ruin. Would you have true pleasure, would you have true gain? Hear the words of your Saviour: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." *Matt.* vi. 33.

QUESTIONS.

How long had God been the Psalmist's hope?—How was he a monster unto many?—When does he pray not to be cast away?—Of what would his mouth daily speak?—In what strength did he go forth?—Thy righteousness, O God, is what?—*How* very high?—How was he brought from the deep of the earth?—What do we learn from this Psalm?

PSALM LXXII.

In this most beautiful Psalm David prays for and describes the happy reign of his son Solomon, in words that apply most strikingly to the Messiah (that is, to Christ). Indeed, many of the expressions possess too large a meaning for Solomon's kingdom, and are fitted to Christ alone.

1 Give the king thy judgements, O God: and thy righteousness unto the king's son.

2 Then shall he judge thy people according unto right: and defend the poor.

3 The mountains also shall bring peace: and the little hills righteousness unto the people.

4 He shall keep the simple folk by their right: defend the children of the poor, and punish the wrong doer.

5 They shall fear thee, as long as the sun and moon endureth: from one generation to another.

6 He shall come down like the rain into a fleece of wool: even as the drops that water the earth.

7 In his time shall the righteous flourish: yea, and abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth.

8 His dominion shall be also from the one sea to the other: and from the flood unto the world's end.

9 They that dwell in the

wilderness shall kneel before him : his enemies shall lick the dust.

10 The kings of Tharsis and of the isles shall give presents : the kings of Arabia and Saba shall bring gifts.

11 All kings shall fall down before him : all nations shall do him service.

12 For he shall deliver the poor when he crieth : the needy also, and him that hath no helper.

13 He shall be favourable to the simple and needy : and shall preserve the souls of the poor.

14 He shall deliver their souls from falsehood and wrong : and dear shall their blood be in his sight.

15 He shall live, and unto him shall be given of the gold of Arabia : prayer shall be made ever unto him, and daily shall he be praised.

16 There shall be an heap of corn in the earth, high upon the hills : his fruit shall shake like Libanus, and shall be green in the city like grass upon the earth.

17 His name shall endure for ever; his name shall remain under the sun among the posterities : which shall be blessed through him; and all the heathen shall praise him.

18 Blessed be the Lord God, even the God of Israel : which only doeth wondrous things;

19 And blessed be the name of his Majesty for ever : and all the earth shall be filled with his Majesty. Amen, Amen.

Ver. 1. *the king*] Solomon—who was both the king and the king's son, and this had never been the case in Israel before. King David was just going to resign the throne to his son.—*Thy judgements,*] Thy wise counsel and instruction, Thy heavenly wisdom; in like manner, Solomon himself prayed for the same. 1 *Kings* iii. 5—14. Thus Messiah sat "upon the throne of His father David." *Luke* i. 32. Upon that spiritual and heavenly throne, of which the throne of David was an emblem and an earnest: and He reigned with "judgment and righteousness." *Isaiah* ix. 7; xxxii. 1. And had "all judgment committed unto Him." *John* v. 22.

Ver. 3. *the mountains, &c.*] It was usual for persons to get up on a mountain, or other high place, to proclaim to the people around peace or war, good tidings or bad. Under this figure the preaching of the Gospel is promised: and thus speaks another prophet, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!" *Isaiah* lii. 7, 8; xl. 9.

Ver. 4. *the simple folk*] The meek, innocent, helpless, unsuspecting people, who are oppressed.

Ver. 5. *shall fear thee,*] Shall reverence thee.—*as long as the sun, &c.*] As long as the world shall last: this could be said of Solomon only by a figure; but it is said of Christ in perfect truth; He reigneth "over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end." *Luke* i. 33.

Ver. 6. *a fleece of wool:*] The proper sense is, according to the Bible Version, "like rain upon the *mown grass;*" refreshing, and making it fruitful.

Ver. 7. *as the moon*] See on ver. 5. Peace and plenty for ever. *Isaiah* xxxii. 15—17.

Ver. 8. *from the one sea to the other,*] From the sea on the west to the great river on the east, all shall be thine, according to the promise. *Exod.* xxiii. 31. But the still wider dominion of Christ, "unto the world's end," is clearly pointed out; and it is remarkably foretold by the prophet Zechariah in the very words of this verse. *Zech.* ix. 9, 10.

Ver. 9. *shall lick the dust.*] Shall be laid low upon the ground, shall be subdued.

Ver. 10. *Tharsis*] Some country (probably Spain) on the borders of the Mediterranean sea. 1 *Kings* x. 22.—*Arabia and Saba*] Two countries very far asunder, in Asia and Africa. 1 *Kings* x. 1—15. In ver. 10, 11, are described the submission and conversion of the great ones of the earth to King Messiah. See on *Psalm* xlv. 13; lxviii. 29.

Ver. 12—14.] The reign of Solomon, and much more the reign of Christ, shall be a reign of mercy and love, as well as of greatness and power: not only shall the rich be received and honoured, but the poor also, the oppressed and helpless, the mourning and broken-hearted, shall be protected and blessed. *Isaiah* xli. 17—20; lvii. 15, 16; lxi. 1—3. *Matt.* v. 3—5. *James* ii. 5.

Ver. 15. *the gold of Arabia:*] See on ver. 10.—*prayer, &c.*] "Prayer shall also be made *for* Him continually." *Bible Version.*

Ver. 16. *high upon the hills;*] Where there has been

no corn before, there shall be plenty.—*his fruit*] The corn upon the hills shall grow so tall and strong, that it shall wave about in the wind, like the cedars on Mount Lebanon. —*and shall be green*] The Bible Version is better, "they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth:" the people shall be prosperous. And all this foreshows the spiritual harvest, the large increase of God's faithful people, in the days of the Gospel; the preaching and success of the word of salvation in strange places, among people who had never heard of it before. *Acts* ii. 41; vi. 7; x. 44—48.

Ver. 17.] Surely every one must perceive that this verse is spoken of One who was more than an earthly king. On this occasion, as on *Psalm* xlv. it must be allowed, that "a greater than Solomon is here;" no other than the Lord Jesus Christ, whose "name is above every name," *Philip.* ii. 9—11, "who is over all, God blessed for ever." *Rom.* ix. 5.

Ver. 18, 19.] These two verses contain what is called a *doxology*, that is, *a giving of praise to God*, for the Messiah's glorious kingdom, and the salvation of His people.

How much more anxious ought parents to be for the godly instruction and the spiritual well-being of their children, than for any worldly possession or honour! How should parents, when they come to die, seek to leave upon the hearts of those they love, the lessons of heavenly wisdom; and beseech their children, with tears of tenderest anxiety, that whatever else be wanting or lost, they may lay fast hold "on the one thing needful!" And let the prayers of such parents be mingled with their tears; let them implore, with their dying breath, the God of wisdom and of mercy, to be the guide and guardian of their offspring; to make them "wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil." *Rom.* xvi. 19. Their wisdom and well-being is this—to be "true members of Christ," to be "faithful soldiers and subjects" of the "King of kings and Lord of lords;" of Him, whose "kingdom ruleth over all," rich and poor alike. O may that day come quickly, when it shall be set up in all the nations of the earth, and be fruitful in righteousness and peace! O that the day were at hand, when it

shall be established in the heavens "with joy unspeakable, and full of glory!" 1 *Pet.* i. 8. May we be "made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light!" *Col.* i. 12. May we spend our days, and end our lives, praying and labouring for the success of the Gospel; blessing the Lord God, even the God of Israel, which only doeth wondrous things! "Unto Him be glory in the Church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end! Amen." *Eph.* iii. 21.

QUESTIONS.

What was the occasion of this Psalm?—Whose coming and kingdom does it show forth?—Who was the king and the king's son?—How shall He judge the people?—The mountains shall bring peace?—The simple folk?—Shall fear Thee?—As long as the sun and moon endureth?—From the one sea to the other?—Like the dust?—Explain ver. 10, 11.—Shall the rich alone be blessed?—Who else?—Corn high upon the hills?—Shake like Libanus?—What is a doxology?—How is this Psalm concluded?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM LXXIII.

This and many of the following Psalms are said to have been written by Asaph: two persons of this name are mentioned, 1 Chron. vi. 39. 2 Chron. xxix. 30. *But it is not certain who was the author: many of them might have been composed by David, and addressed or delivered to Asaph. The Psalm before us, like the* 37th, *describes the vain show, the short prosperity, and the miserable end of the wicked; and it shows how, for want of due thought, the righteous may become discontented and doubtful, when they see the ungodly prosper. In conclusion, the Psalmist reposes on God, as his sure hope, here and hereafter.*

1 Truly God is loving unto Israel: even unto such as are of a clean heart.

2 Nevertheless, my feet were almost gone: my treadings had well nigh slipt.

3 And why? I was grieved at the wicked: I do also see the ungodly in such prosperity.

4 For they are in no peril of death: but are lusty and strong.

5 They come in no misfortune like other folk: neither are they plagued like other men.

6 And this is the cause that they are so holden with pride: and overwhelmed with cruelty.

7 Their eyes swell with fatness: and they do even what they lust.

8 They corrupt other, and speak of wicked blasphemy: their talking is against the Most High.

9 For they stretch forth their mouth unto the heaven: and their tongue goeth through the world.

10 Therefore fall the people unto them: and thereout suck they no small advantage.

11 Tush, say they, how should God perceive it: is there knowledge in the Most High?

12 Lo, these are the ungodly, these prosper in the world, and these have riches in possession: and I said, Then have I cleansed my heart in vain, and washed mine hands in innocency.

13 All the day long have I been punished: and chastened every morning.

14 Yea, and I had almost said even as they: but lo, then I should have condemned the generation of thy children.

15 Then thought I to understand this: but it was too hard for me,

16 Until I went into the sanctuary of God: then understood I the end of these men;

17 Namely, how thou dost set them in slippery places: and castest them down, and destroyest them.

18 O, how suddenly do they consume: perish, and come to a fearful end!

19 Yea, even like as a dream when one awaketh: so shalt thou make their image to vanish out of the city.

20 Thus my heart was grieved: and it went even through my reins.

21 So foolish was I, and ignorant: even as it were a beast before thee.

22 Nevertheless, I am alway by thee: for thou hast holden me by my right hand.

23 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel: and after that receive me with glory.

24 Whom have I in heaven but thee: and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee.

25 My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

26 For lo, they that forsake thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that commit fornication against thee.

27 But it is good for me to hold me fast by God, to put my trust in the Lord God: and to speak of all thy works in the gates of the daughter of Sion.

Ver. 2. *my feet were almost gone:*] From the true way of faith and righteousness.

Ver. 3. *I was grieved at the wicked:*] Hurt and offended at their prosperity, which in my hasty thought I could not account for.

Ver. 4. *in no peril*] In no danger of death, as the righteous are, from persecution; they have no fear; and instead of being wasted with anxiety, and sickness, and want, they live in health and plenty.

Ver. 6. *overwhelmed with cruelty.*] As if plunged into it, and covered with it all over.

Ver. 7. *what they lust.*] Whatever they desire; what their base passions incline them to do.

Ver. 9. *their mouth unto the heaven:*] They speak proudly and loftily, even against God Himself; against all that is good, in heaven and in earth.

Ver. 10. *Therefore fall the people, &c.*] By this means people are led, through weakness or fear, to favour and join them: "for when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error." 2 *Pet.* ii. 18. The unwary are drawn in, and thereby these wicked boasters "*suck out*" and gain for themselves great "advantage." The wicked are always ready to take advantage of those poor souls which they can ensnare and lay hold of.

Ver. 11. *say they,*] Say these ungodly people. See on *Psalm* x. 12.

Ver. 12. *in vain,*] To no profit, seeing that the wicked prosper in the world.—*washed mine hands*] See on *Psalm* xxvi. 6.

Ver. 14. *said even as they:*] Said as they say; reasoned and talked in their foolish manner, as if there really was no profit in serving God.—*then I should have condemned, &c.*] I should have been saying, that all Thy holy and obedient children, from time to time, had been deceived and misled; I should have betrayed their interest and their cause, and have exposed them to injury.

Ver. 16. *into the sanctuary*] To hear and consult God's holy word, and inquire into the nature of His dealings with men.

Ver. 19. *their image*] Their vain show, their false appearances of goodness.

Ver. 20. *was grieved :*] Ver. 3.—*through my reins.*] Through my inmost soul: it affected me deeply. *Psalm* vii. 10.

Ver. 21. *as it were a beast*] As if I had lost my reason, and was governed only by my bodily passions.

Ver. 22. *Nevertheless,*] Although I have been so ignorant and so foolish as to harbour such thoughts as these, still, when "I come to myself" and consider, I do know and feel the great benefit of serving Thee, for Thou hast always been my succour and support; Thou wilt not leave me nor forsake me.

Ver. 23. *receive me with glory.*] Here and in ver. 25, the Psalmist clearly intimates his knowledge and expectation of a future life of eternal glory.

Ver. 25. *My flesh and my heart faileth :*] My bodily frame may waste and decay, and my spirit may fail; but God will sustain me in every trial; and after my body has been brought to the dust, He will raise it again, and be my portion for ever.

Ver. 26. *that commit fornication against thee.*] The Church is often represented as the wife or bride of the Lord. *Psalm* xlv. "For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of Hosts is His name," *Isaiah* liv. 5. Accordingly, He is very often called "a jealous God," watchfully looking to the faithfulness of His people, as a husband to the character and conduct of his wife. And therefore offences against God are described as acts of fornication, or adultery. 2 *Chron.* xxi. 11. *Matt.* xii. 39.

Ver. 27. *to hold me fast*] Not to be moved, whatever the wicked may be, or say, or do.—*daughter of Sion.*] *Psalm* ix. 14.

There is no good reason to doubt, that the Lord is always kind to His people, who love and serve Him; that His dealings with them are full of wisdom and mercy. Yet appearances are sometimes against this truth; the wicked are flourishing and gay; and the righteous mourn. But we must never trust to appearances; never give way, for a moment, to any

doubtful or complaining thoughts; they are utterly false, and dishonourable to God. The wicked may have an air of gaiety, may boast of their pleasures, may "be clothed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day;" *Luke* xvi. 19; but it is only an image of happiness, only a dream; from which they will soon be terribly awakened, and brought to misery. We shall then see that their wealth and prosperity were given them in anger, as a punishment for their hatred against God; that they were "treasuring up wrath" against the day of judgment. Hence we have no reason to envy: no reason to complain that our lot is not like theirs; woe unto us, if it ever should be so! Surely, that man has no right or reason to complain, who has the Almighty God for his friend and his Father—to provide for, protect, uphold, and comfort him—to guide him here with His counsel, and then to receive him to everlasting glory. If the Lord is our portion, we need desire no more besides Him; for He is all-sufficient; the world and all its glory will vanish; our flesh and our heart will soon fail: O then let us provide for that awful, needful hour; that God may then be the strength of our hearts, and our happiness for ever!

QUESTIONS.

To whom is God loving?—Why were the Psalmist's feet almost gone?—And how were they so?—In no peril?—Overwhelmed with cruelty?—What they lust?—Washed mine hands in innocency?—Explain ver. 14.—How and when did he understand the case of the wicked?—In what were they set?—What were they like?—Through my reins?—As it were a beast?—The daughter of Sion?

PSALM LXXIV.

The writer of this Psalm, whoever he was, laments the destruction of the temple; either therefore the Psalm was composed long after David's time, (which is most likely,) or it is a prophecy of that grievous event. An appeal is made to God for protection, on the ground and remembrance of His former enemies.

1 O God, wherefore art thou absent from us so long: why is thy wrath so hot against the sheep of thy pasture?

2 O think upon thy congregation: whom thou hast purchased, and redeemed of old.

3 Think upon the tribe of

thine inheritance : and mount Sion, wherein thou hast dwelt.

4 Lift up thy feet, that thou mayest utterly destroy every enemy : which hath done evil in thy sanctuary.

5 Thine adversaries roar in the midst of thy congregations : and set up their banners for tokens.

6 He that hewed timber afore out of the thick trees : was known to bring it to an excellent work.

7 But now they break down all the carved work thereof : with axes and hammers.

8 They have set fire upon thy holy places : and have defiled the dwelling-place of thy Name, even unto the ground.

9 Yea, they said in their hearts, Let us make havock of them altogether : thus have they burnt up all the houses of God in the land.

10 We see not our tokens ; there is not one prophet more : no, not one is there among us, that understandeth any more.

11 O God, how long shall the adversary do this dishonour : how long shall the enemy blaspheme thy Name, for ever?

12 Why withdrawest thou thy hand : why pluckest thou not thy right hand out of thy bosom to consume the enemy?

13 For God is my King of old : the help that is done upon earth he doeth it himself.

14 Thou didst divide the sea through thy power : thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.

15 Thou smotest the heads of Leviathan in pieces : and gavest him to be meat for the people in the wilderness.

16 Thou broughtest out fountains and waters out of the hard rocks : thou driedst up mighty waters.

17 The day is thine, and the night is thine : thou hast prepared the light and the sun.

18 Thou hast set all the borders of the earth : thou hast made summer and winter.

19 Remember this, O Lord, how the enemy hath rebuked : and how the foolish people hath blasphemed thy Name.

20 O deliver not the soul of thy turtle-dove unto the multitude of the enemies : and forget not the congregation of the poor for ever.

21 Look upon the covenant : for all the earth is full of darkness, and cruel habitations.

22 O let not the simple go away ashamed : but let the poor and needy give praise unto thy Name.

23 Arise, O God, maintain thine own cause : remember how the foolish man blasphemeth thee daily.

24 Forget not the voice of thine enemies : the presumption of them that hate thee increaseth ever more and more.

Ver. 1. *absent*] God is said to be absent, when He

does not help or deliver. *Psalm* x. 1. "A very present help in trouble." *Psalm* xlvi. 1; li. 11.—*the sheep of thy pasture?*] The people of Israel were so called, because the Lord was their shepherd. See on *Psalm* xxiii. 1. All true Christians are now the "sheep of His pasture."

Ver. 2. *thy congregation:*] Thy people.—*whom thou hast purchased,*] By the wonders which Thou hast done for their redemption from bondage and death. Thus the apostle: "ye are not your own, for ye are *bought with a price.*" 1 *Cor.* vi. 19, 20.

Ver. 3. *wherein thou hast dwelt,*] By Thy presence in the ark.

Ver. 4. *lift up thy feet,*] Come speedily, and help us. *Psalm* xliv. 23.

Ver. 5. *roar*] Like wild beasts.—*their banners for tokens.*] Their flags for signs of victory over us.

Ver. 6. *afore*] The cedar-wood for the temple was prepared with great skill, and at great expense and labour. 1 *Kings* v. 6—10. But now it is all broken and cut to pieces, as if it were of no value.

Ver. 8. *the dwelling-place of thy name,*] Thy dwelling-place, where Thou showest forth Thy glory, and acceptest the worship of men. *Exod.* xx. 24. *Deut.* xii. 5—7. 1 *Kings* viii. 20.

Ver. 9. *they said*] The wicked enemies said, "Let us waste and destroy them altogether."

Ver. 10. *we see not our tokens;*] Any signs of God's favour, or of our deliverance. Our holy places and ordinances are trampled upon, and our prophets are silent.

Ver. 11. *for ever?*] Shall this outrage indeed go on for ever?

Ver. 12. *out of thy bosom,*] As men do when they give a blow. Why is Thine hand still? Why dost Thou not strike?

Ver. 13.] There is no help but in Him, who has always been the Almighty King and Protector of His people.

Ver. 14. *divide the sea*] To let Thy people pass through.

Exod. xiv. 21, 22.—*brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.*] Madest the waters to return and destroy the Egyptians, *Exod.* xiv. 26—31, who are here called dragons, or sea-monsters. See on *Psalm* xliv. 20, also *Isaiah* li. 9—11.

Ver. 15. *Leviathan*] A large animal belonging to the waters; here it means the crocodile, which was the most savage and terrible of all the animals in that country, living partly on the land and partly in the water; and it signifies Pharaoh, who was the chief of the cruel enemies of Israel. So that "the heads of Leviathan" may mean "Pharaoh and his princes."—*for the people*] Rather, "for the inhabitants of the wilderness," for the wild beasts which dwelt there: and which devoured the carcases of the Egyptians, as they were cast up on the sea-shore. But this, by a figure, may denote the wild people of that land, who stripped the dead Egyptians of their garments and ornaments, and whatever was found of any value.

Ver. 16. *out of the hard rocks:*] *Exod.* xvii. 5, 6. *Isaiah* xlviii. 21.—*driedst up mighty waters.*] *Joshua* iii. 13.

Ver. 17, 18.] All the works of nature are continually ordered and carried on by Thy Providence.

Ver. 20. *thy turtle-dove*] Thy Church and people, which may be compared to a dove; timid, defenceless, and mournful.

Ver. 21. *look upon the covenant:*] Which Thou madest with Thy people, to bless them in the land of Canaan, and to make them partakers of the covenant which Thou madest with their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. *Levit.* xxvi. 40—42. *Deut.* xxx. 1—10.—*full of darkness*] Of dark places, holes, and caverns, where cruel people dwell, with intent to rob and plunder.

Ver. 22. *the simple*] The meek and oppressed.

Ver. 24. *the presumption*] The proud daring and violence.

It is sad and distressing for the people of God to behold the wicked in the exercise of their ungodly power; insulting the worshippers and worship of their Lord, casting dishonour upon their holy religion, and ready to defile and destroy the House of God itself. The Almighty permits such evils, on account of the unholiness and disobedience of His professing people, of the "sheep of His pasture." Let us beware of assisting to bring these evils upon our Church and nation, by our own unfaithfulness and sins. Let us serve God with all our heart and soul; and then, whatever troubles may come upon the Church, they can do no real harm to ourselves; we shall be happily delivered from them all, in this life or the life to come. And we shall thus be in the favoured condition to implore the Lord's mercy on behalf of His holy cause and people: to beseech Him to remember His wonders of old; to plead before Him the gracious covenant and promise of blessings to His Church; the covenant of grace through a merciful Redeemer, which has been confirmed by such wonderful works, by the resurrection and ascension of a crucified Saviour, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Lord is pleased to be reminded, as it were, of His past mercies; it shows the faith and dependence of His humble servants. Let us "pray without ceasing." 1 *Thess.* v. 17. We may do more by our prayers, than the mightiest by their weapons: the poor may do as much as the rich; and more, if they be "poorer in spirit." And the Lord of Providence and of Grace will hear our prayers, and will certainly answer them, at His own appointed time, and in His own appointed way.

QUESTIONS.

When is God said to be absent?—The sheep of Thy pasture?—Whom thou hast purchased?—Wherein Thou hast dwelt?—Lift up Thy feet?—The adversaries roar?—Their banners for tokens?—Explain ver. 6, 7.—Make havock?—We see not our tokens?—Out of thy bosom?—Explain ver. 14—16.—Thy turtle-dove?—The covenant?—Full of darkness?—The simple?—The presumption?—What do we learn from this Psalm?

THE FIFTEENTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM LXXV.

The duty both of rulers and people is to thank God for all prosperity, and depend upon Him as the Governor of the world. God hath prepared a cup of vengeance for the wicked, and the righteous shall be blessed and exalted. These things form the subject of this Psalm.

1 Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks : yea, unto thee do we give thanks.

2 Thy name also is so nigh : and that do thy wondrous works declare.

3 When I receive the congregation : I shall judge according unto right.

4 The earth is weak, and all the inhabiters thereof : I bear up the pillars of it.

5 I said unto the fools, Deal not so madly : and to the ungodly, Set not up your horn.

6 Set not up your horn on high : and speak not with a stiff neck.

7 For promotion cometh neither from the east nor from the west : nor yet from the south.

8 And why? God is the Judge : he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

9 For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red : it is full mixed, and he poureth out of the same.

10 As for the dregs thereof : all the ungodly of the earth shall drink them, and suck them out.

11 But I will talk of the God of Jacob : and praise him for ever.

12 All the horns of the ungodly also will I break : and the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

Ver. 1, 2.] These first two verses are spoken in the name of the people, addressing their praise to God for His mercies; ver. 3, 4, are spoken, either in the name of the Lord Himself, in answer to this address, or in the name of the king of Israel.

Ver. 2. *thy Name also is so nigh :*] Thou art so near; having "come amongst us, and with great might succoured us." *Psalm* xlvi. 1.

Ver. 4. *I bear up the pillars of it.*] I support it: certainly this language properly applies to God, 1 *Sam.* ii. 8. I the Lord, who made the pillars of the earth, can alone "bear them up." But some think that "the pillars of the earth" mean the foundation of good government, *Psalm* xi. 3, of which the king here spoken of (whether David or some other) was the chief support.

Ver. 5. *set not up your horn.*] Boast not of your power. The horn being the defence of some animals, was used as a sign or emblem of power. *Psalm* xviii. 1.

Ver. 6. *with a stiff neck.*] Wantonly and obstinately, like an animal that will not submit its neck to the yoke, *Exod.* xxxii. Having spoken of the horn, the Psalmist naturally makes mention of the neck.

Ver. 7. *promotion*] Blessing and success.—*neither from the east, &c.*] From no earthly quarter, but from God alone.

Ver. 8. *he putteth down one and setteth up another.*] 1 *Sam.* ii. 7.

Ver. 9. *there is a cup,*] Of wrath and vengeance, *Psalm* xi. 7.—*the wine is red:*] That is, strong; the stronger wine was of a deeper colour.—*it is full mixed,*] They used to mix the wine with drugs, to make it stronger; and frequently its effects were such as to drive people almost to fury and madness: the cup of wine, so mixed, is often made to represent the pouring out of God's anger upon the wicked, and it is called "the cup of His fury," *Isa.* li. 17. 21, 22.

Ver. 10. *the dregs*] That which settled at the bottom of the cup, which would be the bitterest and strongest part of the mixture. The ungodly shall drink it up, even to the last drop; they shall be punished to the uttermost.

Ver. 12. *all the horns*] See on ver. 5.

Whenever we ourselves are prospered in any way, whenever we hear of any good befalling our friends or neighbours, let us always be sure immediately to lift up our hearts to the God of all blessing; to Him, who is the maker and supporter of the pillars of the world, who ordereth all things both in heaven and earth: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom

is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." *James* i. 17. And none can prosper finally, who do not submit to Him and serve Him. They may think highly, as many do, of their own judgment and ability; and they may be suffered to succeed in some of their earthly schemes; but in the end, it is quite certain, that every unrepenting sinner will be brought to ruin, and will be compelled to drink the cup of the Lord's fury, yea, "the very dregs of the cup of trembling." *Isa.* li. 17. But while the horns of the wicked shall be broken, while they shall be stripped of all their gain, and all their pleasure, and be abased with shame in the dust, the righteous shall be exalted with everlasting honour; shall "talk of the God of Jacob," their blessed Lord and Saviour, their Almighty Redeemer and King, and "praise His name for ever." *Amen.*

QUESTIONS.

Unto whom do we give thanks?—And why?—Thy name is nigh?—How is that declared?—I bear up the pillars of it?—Set not up your horn?—Speak not with a stiff neck?—Promotion?—Cometh not from whence?—From whom does it come?—Explain ver. 9, 10.—What will be done to the ungodly?—What to the righteous?

PSALM LXXVI.

A thanksgiving Psalm after some great victory; probably referring to the deliverance from Sennacherib and his army. 2 Kings xix. Isa. xxxvi. xxxvii.

1 In Jewry is God known: his Name is great in Israel.

2 At Salem is his tabernacle: and his dwelling in Sion.

3 There brake he the arrows of the bow: the shield, the sword, and the battle.

4 Thou art of more honour and might: than the hills of the robbers.

5 The proud are robbed, they have slept their sleep: and all the men whose hands were mighty have found nothing.

6 At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob: both the chariot and horse are fallen.

7 Thou, even thou, art to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when thou art angry?

8 Thou didst cause thy judgement to be heard from heaven: the earth trembled, and was still,

9 When God arose to judgement: and to help all the meek upon earth.

10 The fierceness of man shall turn to thy praise: and

the fierceness of them shalt thou refrain.

11 Promise unto the Lord your God, and keep it, all ye that are round about him : bring presents unto him that ought to be feared.

12 He shall refrain the spirit of princes : and is wonderful among the kings of the earth.

Ver. 1. *In Jewry*] In Judah, in Judea, the land of the Jews.—*His name*] His power and excellency.

Ver. 2. *Salem*] Jerusalem.

Ver. 3. *there brake he, &c.*] He took away the power of the enemy, and conquered them, as if He had broken in pieces their bows and arrows, and other weapons.

Ver. 4. *of more honour and might:*] Thou, O Sion, (or, Thou, O God, who dwellest in Sion,) art mightier than all the strong hills and places of the enemy, from which they come forth to ravage and rob Thy people, and to which they carry their prey.

Ver. 5. *the proud are robbed,*] The proud foes have had their strength taken from them.—*slept their sleep :*] This expression agrees well with the circumstances under which Sennacherib's army was destroyed : a hundred and eighty-five thousand of them perished in their sleep. "And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand (a hundred thousand and eighty-five thousand): and when they (the children of Israel) arose in the morning, behold they (the enemy's army) were all dead corpses," 2 *Kings* xix. 35. *Isa.* xxxvii. 36.

Ver. 10. *the fierceness of man*] The rage of man, when Thou hast refrained, (when Thou hast stopped and destroyed it,) shall turn to Thy honour, and call forth the praises of Thy people.

Ver. 11. *bring presents*] Bring your grateful offerings.—*to be feared.*] Worshipped and served.

Ver. 12. *shall refrain, &c.*] Shall have them in His power ; shall order their unruly wills as He pleases.

When we consider the power and justice of God, we may well say, "'Thou, even Thou, art to be feared;" and when we consider His mercy and goodness, we may well say, "Thou,

even Thou, art to be loved." We see, even in this world, the great advantage of loving and fearing God: we see how His friends and worshippers and servants are blessed, if not with outward prosperity, yet with inward joy and peace; and we see how his enemies are recompensed, sometimes by sad troubles without, always by wretchedness within: but this righteous dealing of God will be seen far more clearly and awfully on the judgment day; then will the Judge receive and welcome His people. But who "will stand in His sight, if He is angry" with them on that day? Their time for salvation will be past, and gone; they despised the blessed Jesus, the Almighty Redeemer and Saviour—and there is no other: they trampled on His mercy, and nothing can remain for them but wrath. "I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear Him which after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, Fear Him." *Luke* xii. 4, 5.

QUESTIONS.

In Jewry?—At Salem?—There brake He, &c.?—Explain ver. 4, 5, 6.—To be feared?—The fierceness of man?—How shall it turn to God's praise?—Refrain?—Bring presents?—He shall refrain the spirit of princes?

PSALM LXXVII.

The severe trial of the Psalmist under affliction is described, with the means to which he had recourse for relief, by remembering God's past mercies to His people.

1 I will cry unto God with my voice: even unto God will I cry with my voice, and he shall hearken unto me.

2 In the time of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran, and ceased not in the night season; my soul refused comfort.

3 When I am in heaviness, I will think upon God: when my heart is vexed, I will complain.

4 Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so feeble, that I cannot speak.

5 I have considered the days of old: and the years that are past.

6 I call to remembrance my song: and in the night I commune with mine own heart, and search out my spirits.

7 Will the Lord absent himself for ever: and will he be no more intreated?

8 Is his mercy clean gone for ever: and is his promise

come utterly to an end for evermore?

9 Hath God forgotten to be gracious: and will he shut up his loving-kindness in displeasure?

10 And I said, It is mine own infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most Highest.

11 I will remember the works of the Lord: and call to mind thy wonders of old time.

12 I will think also of all thy works: and my talking shall be of thy doings.

13 Thy way, O God, is holy: who is so great a God as our God?

14 Thou art the God that doeth wonders: and hast declared thy power among the people.

15 Thou hast mightily delivered thy people: even the sons of Jacob and Joseph.

16 The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee, and were afraid: the depths also were troubled.

17 The clouds poured out water, the air thundered: and thine arrows went abroad.

18 The voice of thy thunder was heard round about: the lightnings shone upon the ground; the earth was moved, and shook withal.

19 Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in the great waters: and thy footsteps are not known.

20 Thou leddest thy people like sheep: by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Ver. 2. *my sore ran,*] My grief continued; the troubles of the mind and spirit being often represented by disorders of the body, *Psalm* vi. 2.—*ceased not in the night season;*] It was constant; I had no relief.

Ver. 6. *my song:*] Which I formerly composed in memory of Thy mercies.—*in the night I commune*] *Psalm* iv. 4.—*search out my spirits.*] "My spirit made diligent search." *Bible Version.* In my deep distress and complaining, I pondered and inquired with myself, and said, "Will the Lord absent Himself for ever?" See ver. 7, 8, 9.

Ver. 10. *mine own infirmity:*] My soul answered, "It is my own weakness;" all these doubtful questions arise from my weak faith.—*the years of the right hand*] The times when God lifted up His right hand, showed His great strength to deliver His people.

Ver. 14—20.] The wonders here spoken of are those wrought in Egypt, for Israel's deliverance; and they are continually made mention of as a ground of hope and trust in God for future blessings. In like manner, our deliverance from the bondage of sin, by the death and resurrec-

tion of Christ, may always be regarded by the true believer as the token and pledge of God's unchanging favour: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" *Rom.* viii. 32.

Ver. 16. *the waters saw thee, &c.*] The sea is here very finely represented as endued with sense and perception; the waters were thoroughly obedient, as if they could see or feel the Godhead present.

Ver. 17. *Thine arrows*] The lightning and thunderbolts. This verse may explain the expressions in *Exod.* xiv. 24, where it is said that the Lord troubled the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels, and fought for Israel.

Ver. 19. *Thy way is in the sea,*] As thou didst lead Thy people through the sea; and there was afterwards no tracing of the path which Thy presence opened for them, so art thou wonderful in all the dealings of Thy Providence and grace, so is there no tracing of the wisdom of Thy doing, and so dost Thou deliver us in a wonderful and unlooked-for and unlikely way. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" *Rom.* xi. 33.

Ver. 20. *like sheep:*] As a shepherd does his flock. It was in fact, "the good Shepherd," the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the people were thus led. *Isa.* xl. 9—11. *John* x. 11—14. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever"—"that great Shepherd of the sheep." *Heb.* xiii. 8. 20.

Whenever the wicked enemy of our souls would tempt us, under sore trials, to despair, or to charge the Lord with hard dealing towards us, let us immediately betake ourselves to prayer; let us "cry unto God with our voice; even unto God with our voice," and beg Him to give us a lively sense of His sure and unchangeable mercy to all His people. Every fear and every complaint, in the bosom of His true servants, arises from the weakness of their faith, from their want of due confidence in Him: "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" *Matt.* viii. 26. On all such occasions, therefore, let us pray, as the

Apostles did, "Lord, increase our faith." *Luke* xvii. 5. Let us also make diligent search, and see if there be any way of wickedness, for which the Lord is afflicting us; that so we may be corrected and amended; that our rebellious spirit may be humbled to repentance; that we may "be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live." *Heb.* xii. 9. Thus will our trouble "turn to our profit:" and the God of mercy, who has all along been with us and with our fathers, will be with us still. "The loving kindness of God towards Israel did not stop at the Red Sea, but He conducted His chosen flock, by the guidance of faithful pastors, through all the perils of the wilderness, to the land of promise. We likewise, through Thy mercy, O blessed Lord Jesus, have (as it were) passed the Red Sea at our baptism; and are now journeying in the wilderness. Give us those meek and lowly and teachable dispositions, which become the sheep of Thy pasture; set over us skilful and watchful shepherds; and be Thou ever both with them and with us: until, having surmounted all difficulties and dangers, led by Thy grace and supported by Thy providence, we all come, in perfect safety, to the land of everlasting rest; there to live with Thee, one fold under one shepherd, world without end."—(*Bishop Horne.*)

QUESTIONS.

When did the Psalmist cry unto God?—What did he do when in heaviness?—In the night I commune?—What did he say in his complaint (ver. 7, 8, 9)?—And to what was his complaint owing?—The years of the right hand?—The waters saw Thee, &c.?—Thine arrows?—Thy way is in the sea, &c.?—What does this Psalm teach us to do, in time of affliction?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM LXXVIII.

Here are recorded many of the wonders which God wrought for unthankful Israel, from the time when they were about to leave Egypt to the reign of David.

1 Hear my law, O my people: incline your ears unto the words of my mouth.

2 I will open my mouth in a parable: I will declare hard sentences of old;

3 Which we have heard and known: and such as our fathers have told us;

4 That we should not hide them from the children of the generations to come: but to

show the honour of the Lord, his mighty and wonderful works that he hath done.

5 He made a covenant with Jacob, and gave Israel a law: which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children;

6 That their posterity might know it: and the children which were yet unborn.

7 To the intent that when they came up: they might show their children the same;

8 That they might put their trust in God: and not to forget the works of God, but to keep his commandments;

9 And not to be as their forefathers, a faithless and stubborn generation: a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit cleaveth not stedfastly unto God;

10 Like as the children of Ephraim: who being harnessed, and carrying bows, turned themselves back in the day of battle.

11 They kept not the covenant of God: and would not walk in his law;

12 But forgat what he had done: and the wonderful works that he had showed for them.

13 Marvellous things did he in the sight of our forefathers, in the land of Egypt: even in the field of Zoan.

14 He divided the sea, and let them go through: he made the waters to stand on an heap.

15 In the day-time also he led them with a cloud: and all the night through with a light of fire.

16 He clave the hard rocks in the wilderness: and gave them drink thereof, as it had been out of the great depth.

17 He brought waters out of the stony rock: so that it gushed out like the rivers.

18 Yet for all this they sinned more against him: and provoked the Most Highest in the wilderness.

19 They tempted God in their hearts: and required meat for their lust.

20 They spake against God also, saying: Shall God prepare a table in the wilderness?

21 He smote the stony rock indeed, that the water gushed out, and the streams flowed withal: but can he give bread also, or provide flesh for his people?

22 When the Lord heard this, he was wroth: so the fire was kindled in Jacob, and there came up heavy displeasure against Israel;

23 Because they believed not in God: and put not their trust in his help.

24 So he commanded the clouds above: and opened the doors of heaven.

25 He rained down manna also upon them for to eat: and gave them food from heaven.

26 So man did eat angels' food: for he sent them meat enough.

27 He caused the east wind to blow under heaven: and through his power he brought in the south-west wind.

28 He rained flesh upon them as thick as dust: and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea.

29 He let it fall among their tents : even round about their habitation.

30 So they did eat, and were well filled; for he gave them their own desire : they were not disappointed of their lust.

31 But while the meat was yet in their mouths, the heavy wrath of God came upon them, and slew the wealthiest of them : yea, and smote down the chosen men that were in Israel.

32 But for all this they sinned yet more : and believed not his wondrous works.

33 Therefore their days did he consume in vanity : and their years in trouble.

34 When he slew them, they sought him : and turned them early, and enquired after God.

35 And they remembered that God was their strength : and that the high God was their Redeemer.

36 Nevertheless, they did but flatter him with their mouth : and dissembled with him in their tongue.

37 For their heart was not whole with him : neither continued they stedfast in his covenant.

38 But he was so merciful, that he forgave their misdeeds : and destroyed them not.

39 Yea, many a time turned he his wrath away : and would not suffer his whole displeasure to arise.

40 For he considered that they were but flesh : and that they were even a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.

41 Many a time did they provoke him in the wilderness : and grieved him in the desert.

42 They turned back, and tempted God : and moved the Holy One in Israel.

43 They thought not of his hand : and of the day when he delivered them from the hand of the enemy;

44 How he had wrought his miracles in Egypt : and his wonders in the field of Zoan.

45 He turned their waters into blood : so that they might not drink of the rivers.

46 He sent lice among them, and devoured them up : and frogs to destroy them.

47 He gave their fruit unto the caterpillar : and their labour unto the grasshopper.

48 He destroyed their vines with hailstones : and their mulberry trees with the frost.

49 He smote their cattle also with hailstones : and their flocks with hot thunder-bolts.

50 He cast upon them the furiousness of his wrath, anger, displeasure, and trouble : and sent evil angels among them.

51 He made a way to his indignation, and spared not their soul from death : but gave their life over to the pestilence;

52 And smote all the firstborn in Egypt : the most principal and mightiest in the dwellings of Ham.

53 But as for his own people, he led them forth like sheep : and carried them in the wilderness like a flock.

54 He brought them out safely, that they should not

fear : and overwhelmed their enemies with the sea.

55 And brought them within the borders of his sanctuary : even to his mountain which he purchased with his right hand.

56 He cast out the heathen also before them : caused their land to be divided among them for an heritage, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.

57 So they tempted and displeased the most high God : and kept not his testimonies;

58 But turned their backs, and fell away like their forefathers : starting aside like a broken bow.

59 For they grieved him with their hill-altars : and provoked him to displeasure with their images.

60 When God heard this, he was wroth : and took sore displeasure at Israel.

61 So that he forsook the tabernacle in Silo : even the tent that he had pitched among men.

62 He delivered their power into captivity : and their beauty into the enemy's hand.

63 He gave his people over also unto the sword : and was wroth with his inheritance.

64 The fire consumed their young men : and their maidens were not given to marriage.

65 Their priests were slain with the sword : and there were no widows to make lamentation.

66 So the Lord awaked as one out of sleep : and like a giant refreshed with wine.

67 He smote his enemies in the hinder parts : and put them to a perpetual shame.

68 He refused the tabernacle of Joseph : and chose not the tribe of Ephraim;

69 But chose the tribe of Judah : even the hill of Sion which he loved.

70 And there he built his temple on high : and laid the foundation of it like the ground which he hath made continually.

71 He chose David also his servant : and took him away from the sheepfolds.

72 As he was following the ewes great with young ones he took him : that he might feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.

73 So he fed them with a faithful and true heart : and ruled them prudently with all his power.

Ver. 1. *my law,*] My instruction.

Ver. 2. *in a parable ;*] In lessons taken from the example and history of Israel.—*hard sentences of old ;*] Which have been handed down from old times, and have not been properly considered or understood. This verse is applied to the circumstance of our Lord teaching by parables. *Matt.* xiii. 34, 35.

Ver. 5. *a covenant*] *Psalm* lxxiv. 21.—*their children ;*] *Gen.* xviii. 19.

Ver. 6. *their posterity*] Their children's children, all their race or descendants.

Ver. 10. *Like as the children of Ephraim :*] We do not find any account of the tribe of Ephraim in particular behaving ill at this time; perhaps, therefore, it may mean Israel in general, one tribe being put for all; or it may allude to some occasion on which the Ephraimites, though not mentioned, were more cowardly than the rest; as in *Deut.* i. 42—46.—*harnessed,*] "Armed," *Bib. Vers.* Clad in armour, like a horse in harness.

Ver. 13. *Zoan.*] A chief city in Egypt.

Ver. 14—17.] *Exod.* xiii.—xvii. *Numb.* xx. 8—13. *Deut.* viii. ix.

Ver. 17. *out of the stony rock :*] Which rock represented Christ, 1 *Cor.* x. 4, who was smitten for the life of His people, and is the Rock of eternal ages. The water coming from the Rock, and "following the Israelites as they journeyed through the wilderness, being an emblem of the pouring out and the influence of the Holy Spirit, which accompanies the people of God in their journey through the wilderness of life."

Ver. 18—31.] Read the history in the chapters of Exodus above referred to, and in *Numb.* xi.

Ver. 19. *their lust.*] Their ungodly desire and appetite.

Ver. 20. *prepare a table*] Provide food.

Ver. 25. *manna*] A sign of Christ, who is the true bread. *John* vi. 31—35. 48—51.

Ver. 26. *angels' food :*] So called, say some, as having been brought from heaven by angels. But the true sense may be, So man did eat "the bread of the *mighty ;*" *i. e.* bread fit to support the mightiest and greatest of men. (*Bible Version, marg.*)

Ver. 30. *of their lust.*] Ver. 19.

Ver. 31. *the wealthiest*] The strongest: wealth often signifies well-being. *Psalm* lxix. 23.

Ver. 33. *in vanity—in trouble.*] They wandered up and down the wilderness in vain, never reaching Canaan. *Deut.* ii. 14—16.

Ver. 34—42.] "Let favour be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness." *Isa.* xxvi. 8—11. See *Numb.* xvi. xx. xxi. xxv.

Ver. 35. *their Redeemer.*] Their deliverer from trouble and danger.

Ver. 36. *dissembled*] Pretended, concealed the truth; said what they did not mean.

Ver. 40. *but flesh :*] But mortal; soon dying, and then their day of trial over; so He spared them in mercy, to see if "His goodness would lead them to repentance." *Rom.* ii. 4.

Ver. 42. *tempted God :*] Tried whether He would punish them again: thus abusing His mercy and daring His wrath.

Ver. 43. *his hand :*] His power.

Ver. 45—55.] *Exod.* vii.—xiv.

Ver. 47. *unto the grasshopper.*] "Unto the locust." *Bible Version.*

Ver. 50. *evil angels*] The word "angel" means *messenger:* and some think that "evil angels" only means messengers of evil: but it may signify evil spirits, which God might permit to plague and punish them. When God suffers a thing to come, He is said to send it. *Judg.* ix. 23.

Ver. 51. *a way to his indignation,*] A means of executing His righteous judgment.

Ver. 52. *Ham.*] He was one of the three sons of Noah, and from him came the Egyptians. *Gen.* x. 1. 6. "And the sons of Ham (were) Cush and Mizraim," &c. *Mizraim* was the Hebrew name for Egypt.

Ver. 55.] See on *Psalm* lxxvii. 20.

Ver. 55. *of his sanctuary :*] Of His holy land; in which His sanctuary, or place of worship, was to be set up.—*his mountain*] Sion, which David took in the strength of the Lord, 2 *Sam.* v. 6, 7, and which God is therefore said to have "purchased" or obtained by His power.

Ver. 56—60.] See the books of *Joshua* and *Judges*, and 1 *Sam.* i.—iv.

Ver. 56. *their land*] The land of the heathen.—*an heritage,*] Or possession.

Ver. 57. *they tempted*] Ver. 42.

Ver. 58. *like a broken bow.*] That will not carry an arrow to the mark, and so deceives and disappoints the shooter.

Ver. 59. *their hill-altars:*] The altars which they raised for idol-worship, upon hills or high places.—*their images.*] Their graven images or idols.

Ver. 60. *heard this,*] Perceived this.

Ver. 61. *in Silo:*] In Shiloh, where the ark resided; and from whence God suffered it to be taken, and to fall into the hands of the Philistines. 1 *Sam.* i. 3; iv. 3—11.

Ver. 62. *their power—their beauty*] That which was their power and glory, namely, the ark (1 *Sam.* iv. 21), as taken captive, was made prisoner.

Ver. 64. *The fire*] The flames of war, the fire and fury of God's anger. *Deut.* xxxii. 22—25.

Ver. 65. *Their priests—no widows*] 1 *Sam.* iv. 17. 19, 20.

Ver. 67.] See 1 *Sam.* v. vi. 1—11.

Ver. 68. *He refused the tabernacle of Joseph:*] The ark, after its return, went no more to Shiloh, which was in the tribe of "Ephraim," the son of "Joseph," but was brought first to Kirjath-jearim, (1 *Sam.* vi. 24,) a city of the tribe of Judah; and from thence, after a short stay in the house of Obed-edom, to Mount Sion (1 *Chron.* xv. xvi.) the "chosen hill."

Ver. 70. *built his temple*] By the hands of Solomon, (1 *Kings* vi.) which was not moveable like the tabernacle in the wilderness, but fixed "continually" and firm "like the ground."

Ver. 71. *the sheepfolds.*] 1 *Sam.* xvii. 15. 2 *Sam.* vii. 8. David was thus a remarkable type, or pattern, of Christ, "the good Shepherd."

Ver. 72. *feed Jacob—and Israel*] The children of Jacob and Israel. He was taken from feeding sheep, to feed the flock of God; as the apostles were taken from their trade of fishing, to be "fishers of men." *Matt.* iv. 19. Lowliness of station is no hindrance to God's favour; "whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly." *Matt.* xiii. 12. These three last verses show the great excellency of David's character both as a man and a king.

Who can read without godly sorrow and righteous indignation, the account of Israel's ungrateful, wicked, and rebellious behaviour towards the God of mercy and goodness, as largely set forth in this Psalm?—How sad a picture does it present to us of the weakness and sinfulness of fallen man! And yet the history of Israel does but too truly describe the character of other Churches. Look at our own Church; look at the spiritual condition of this land, in which the purest form of religion has been established; upon which God has bestowed His most precious gifts and blessings; the purest ordinances and best means of worship; look at this land, through which the Holy Bible has been preached and spread, from east to west, from north to south; to the palaces of the wealthy and the cottages of the poor. Consider these great blessings, these rich and manifold means of grace, and then turn your eyes to the characters and lives of the people of this land; and behold by far the greater number of them, without any feeling whatever of grateful love, without any true sense of religion, lost and "dead in trespasses and sins," living in open rebellion against their gracious God and Saviour. Oh! well may it fill our hearts with sorrow, and our eyes with tears, especially when we think what must become of the souls of such people when they die! But let us look to ourselves, and see that we be not of this unhappy number of thoughtless and ungodly beings. Are we duly thankful for the great and continual mercies of our God? for our health and strength, our food and raiment? for "the bread of life," Christ Jesus our Lord and Redeemer? for the Holy Spirit, the "well of water springing up into everlasting life?" *John* iv. 14. For having been made at our baptism "members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven?" for the Holy Word of God? for our Holy Church, our holy worship, and all the holy instruction we have received? "for all the means of grace, and hopes of glory?" and are we daily using all these means, with constant prayer and diligence; remembering the account we must one day give, "like unto men that wait for their Lord?" *Luke* xii. 36. These things were "promised and vowed" in our name; and most of us have taken the promise and vow upon ourselves: have we kept it? are we keeping it faithfully? Or are we, like Israel, forgetful, and failing, and fallen away? Certain it is, that if we are like Israel, in our character and conduct, we shall be like Israel in our end—cast away by God. O let us "watch and pray," strive and labour, that God's great mercies to us may not have been shown in vain, may not increase our condemnation; that we may "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." *Tit.* ii. 10. That we may "walk in all the commandments and

ordinances of the Lord blameless." *Luke* i. 6. For "how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" *Heb.* ii. 3.

QUESTIONS.

In a parable?—Hard sentences of old?—Posterity?—Being harnessed?—Zoan?—Prepare a table?—The rock smitten by Moses, of what was it an emblem or type?—The fire was kindled in Jacob?—Manna, of what was that a sign?—Angels' food?—Not disappointed of their lust?—The wealthiest?—Explain verse 33.—Their Redeemer?—Dissembled?—They were but flesh?—Evil angels?—Who was Ham?—Within the borders of His sanctuary?—To His mountain?—Which He purchased?—Like a broken bow?—Hill-altars?—Images?—Forsook the tabernacle in Silo?—Their power into captivity, &c.?—Explain ver. 68, 69, 70.—What is the character here given of David?—How was he in this instance a type of Christ?

THE SIXTEENTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM LXXIX.

This Psalm, like the lxxivth, *relates to the injuries done to the city and people of God, and to the proud boasting of the enemy.*

1 O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance: thy holy temple have they defiled, and made Jerusalem an heap of stones.

2 The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the air: and the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the land.

3 Their blood have they shed like water on every side of Jerusalem: and there was no man to bury them.

4 We are become an open shame to our enemies: a very scorn and derision unto them that are round about us.

5 Lord, how long wilt thou be angry: shall thy jealousy burn like fire for ever?

6 Pour out thine indignation upon the heathen that have not

known thee : and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name.

7 For they have devoured Jacob : and laid waste his dwelling-place.

8 O remember not our old sins; but have mercy upon us, and that soon : for we are come to great misery.

9 Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name : O deliver us, and be merciful unto our sins, for thy name's sake.

10 Wherefore do the heathen say : Where is now their God?

11 O let the vengeance of thy servants' blood that is shed : be openly showed upon the heathen in our sight.

12 O let the sorrowful sighing of the prisoners come before thee : according to the greatness of thy power, preserve thou those that are appointed to die.

13 And for the blasphemy wherewith our neighbours have blasphemed thee : reward thou them, O Lord, sevenfold into their bosom.

14 So we that are thy people, and sheep of thy pasture, shall give thee thanks for ever : and will always be showing forth thy praise from generation to generation.

Ver. 3. *like water*] In such great quantities.

Ver. 4. *derision*] Laughter. *Psalm* ii. 4.

Ver. 5. *thy jealousy*] Thy displeasure and indignation. See on *Psalm* lxxiii. 26.

Ver. 6. *Pour out*] It is in the nature of a prophecy, "Thou shalt pour out," &c.

Ver. 7. *devoured Jacob :*] The people of Jacob.

Ver. 8. *our old sins ;*] Sin is the only cause of God's forsaking His people. Thus in the Litany we beseech God not to remember our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers.

Ver. 9. *for the glory of thy name :*] That Thy power and goodness may be seen and glorified.

Ver. 10. *Where is now their God?*] *Psalm* xlii. 3. Why are they suffered to go on, asking this question, and meaning thereby that we have no God?

Ver. 11. *the vengeance*] The avenging, the due punishment.

Ver. 12. *of the prisoners*] The land was in a state of captivity or bondage to the people of Babylon.

Ver. 13. *for the blasphemy*] For the evil and false speaking of our heathen neighbours against Thee, implying that because Thou dost not deliver us, Thou art not

able to do it; in fact, charging the Almighty God with weakness. For this they shall be "rewarded sevenfold into their bosom;" they shall be largely paid, they shall "receive the due reward of their deeds." *Luke* xxiii. 41. —*sevenfold*] Manifold; as seven times are many times, *Dan.* iii. 19. *Luke* xvii. 4.—*into their bosom.*] *Psalm* xxxv. 14.

Ver. 14. *sheep of thy pasture,*] *Psalm* lxxiv. 1.

Every trouble we endure, every evil which an enemy is suffered to bring upon us, is owing to sin; the Holy Ghost has been provoked and offended, and is showing His righteous displeasure for the correction and amendment of His servants. But still the very enemies who are punishing the Lord's offending people, are at the same time preparing punishment for themselves; though they are doing the Lord's work, they are not intending to do it; they are acting from a bad motive, and in a bad spirit; they are endeavouring to tread down the servants of God, and opposing God Himself; He, therefore, against their will, makes them instruments of accomplishing His own purposes, and when they have run their wicked course, He will cut them off. They cannot go a step beyond the time appointed by God; when they have dealt out His measure of wrath, their arm will be stayed. We need not then be afraid, whatever they may say or do: all who repent and turn to God shall be defended and secured against any evil from man. We cannot help, indeed, being shocked and grieved at the oaths and blasphemies, and all the ungodly sayings and doings of those around us; like "just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked." 2 *Pet.* ii. 7. But there is no reason for fear: "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." 1 *Pet.* v. 6. Hear the encouraging words of the Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." *Luke* xii. 32. And, "No man is able to pluck (you) out of my Father's hand." *John* x. 29.

QUESTIONS.

Whither had the heathen come?—Shed like water?—Derision?—Thy jealousy?—Devoured Jacob?—For the glory of Thy name?—Reward them?—Sevenfold?—Into their bosom?—The sheep of Thy pasture?

PSALM LXXX.

The Church, suffering under bondage and oppression, crieth unto God for help and deliverance.

1 Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep : show thyself also, thou that sittest upon the cherubims.

2 Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasses : stir up thy strength, and come, and help us.

3 Turn us again, O God : show the light of thy countenance, and we shall be whole.

4 O Lord God of hosts : how long wilt thou be angry with thy people that prayeth?

5 Thou feedest them with the bread of tears : and givest them plenteousness of tears to drink.

6 Thou hast made us a very strife unto our neighbours : and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

7 Turn us again, thou God of hosts : show the light of thy countenance, and we shall be whole.

8 Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt : thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it;

9 Thou madest room for it : and when it had taken root, it filled the land.

10 The hills were covered with the shadow of it : and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedar-trees.

11 She stretched out her branches unto the sea : and her boughs unto the river.

12 Why hast thou then broken down her hedge : that all they that go by pluck off her grapes?

13 The wild boar out of the wood doth root it up : and the wild beasts of the field devour it.

14 Turn thee again, thou God of hosts, look down from heaven : behold, and visit this vine;

15 And the place of the vineyard that thy right hand hath planted : and the branch that thou madest so strong for thyself.

16 It is burnt with fire and cut down : and they shall perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

17 Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand : and upon the son of man whom thou madest so strong for thine own self.

18 And so will not we go back from thee : O let us live and we shall call upon thy name.

19 Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts : show the light of thy countenance, and we shall be whole.

Ver. 1. *O thou Shepherd of Israel,*] *Psalm* lxxvii. 20.

—leadest Joseph] The people whom Joseph, in Thy hand, was a means of preserving and blessing.—*that sittest upon the cherubims.*] That dwellest on Thy mercy-seat in the ark, between the cherubims. *Exod.* xxv. 20—22.

Ver. 2. *Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasses:*] When the Israelites journeyed in the wilderness, these three tribes followed next after the ark, *Numb.* ii. 17—24, and therefore God (whose presence dwelt in the ark) was said to be immediately before them. The sense is, "As thou didst use to go before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasses, and show favour to Thy people of old, so be pleased to manifest Thy presence and save us."

Ver. 3.] This verse is a kind of chorus in prayer, and occurs three times in the Psalm.—*the light of thy countenance,*] *Psalm* iv. 7.—*shall be whole.*] Shall be in health and safety. Their distress is compared to a disorder, from which they would be healed.

Ver. 5. *bread of tears—tears to drink.*] Such is their grief, that they can do nothing but weep; tears are, as it were, their meat and drink. See *Psalm* xlii. 3.

Ver. 8. *a vine out of Egypt:*] The Israelites were brought out of Egypt and settled in Canaan, after the heathen inhabitants of the land had been conquered and cast out: this is here compared to the "planting of a vine." See *Isa.* v. 1—7. *Matt.* xxi. 33—46.

Ver. 10.] Israel spread all over the land, and flourished exceedingly.

Ver. 11. *unto the sea—unto the river.*] From the Mediterranean Sea to the river Euphrates, as expressly promised, *Deut.* xi. 24, and fulfilled in the days of Solomon, 1 *Kings* iv. 21. To the Christian Church the whole earth was the land of promise, and the Gospel was preached to all nations. *Psalm* ii. 8.

Ver. 12. *broken down her hedge:*] Taken away the protection of Thy people. The strength and favour of the Lord are to His Church what a hedge is to a vineyard, the means of keeping it from harm.—*pluck off her grapes.*] Strip her of all that is valuable.

Ver. 13. *the wild boar—the wild beasts*] Furious ene-

mies rob and lay waste the Church, as wild beasts would destroy and tread down the tender vines.

Ver. 14—16.] Visit thine own people, once so strong for Thy honour and glory, now so weak and perishing. The particular branch, ver. 15, may denote some righteous deliverer or king in that day, perhaps king Hezekiah; or some family, as that of David: but it especially points to the Messiah, who is repeatedly foretold under the figure of a branch. *Isa.* xi. 1. *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6.

Ver. 16. *they shall perish*] That is, the enemies and persecutors, represented in ver. 13, by the wild boar and wild beasts.

Ver. 17. *the man of thy right hand—the son of man*] The same is "the Branch;" "the man of thy right hand," means the man of Thy power, who will perform Thy will, ver. 15.

Ver. 18. *will not we go back*] As we have done on so many former occasions. See *Psalm* lxxviii.

God will not spare His own vineyard, His own Church and people, from desolation, if He behold within His sacred inclosure unfruitfulness, rashness, and corruption: the vineyard itself can never be wholly destroyed, "the gates of hell (the powers of darkness) shall not prevail against it." *Matt.* xvi. 18. But every barren plant which the labour of man and the dews of heaven cannot alter, shall be rooted out: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it that it may bear more fruit." *John* xv. 2. Let us ever be looking, with the eye of faith, to the "Son of Man," the Lord of the vineyard, and pray that He will be pleased to water our souls with His Holy Spirit, so that we may "bring forth fruit in due season;" so that we may "be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified." *Isa.* lxi. 3. The end of our redemption is, that we should serve Him who hath redeemed us, and "go back" no more to our old sins. That soul which has received life from Christ should "live" to His honour and glory; that mouth which has been opened by Him can do no less than show forth His praise, and "call upon" His saving Name. Thus "in the light of His countenance we shall be whole."

QUESTIONS.

Thou that leadest Joseph?—That sittest upon the cherubims? —Explain verse 3.—And verse 5.—A vine out of Egypt?—The sea—the river?—Broken down her hedge?—Pluck off her grapes?—The wild boar—the wild beasts?—The branch?—They shall perish; who?—The man of Thy right hand?—The Son of Man?

PSALM LXXXI.

An exhortation to praise God with psalms and musical instruments, on a solemn feast day. Jehovah is introduced, as reminding the people of His mercies—of their duties—of their neglect and the consequences of it.

1 Sing we merrily unto God our strength : make a cheerful noise unto the God of Jacob.

2 Take the psalm, bring hither the tabret : the merry harp with the lute.

3 Blow up the trumpet in the new moon : even in the time appointed, and upon our solemn feast-day.

4 For this was made a statute for Israel : and a law of the God of Jacob.

5 This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony : when he came out of the land of Egypt, and had heard a strange language.

6 I eased his shoulder from the burden : and his hands were delivered from making the pots.

7 Thou calledst upon me in troubles, and I delivered thee : and heard thee what time as the storm fell upon thee.

8 I proved thee also : at the waters of strife.

9 Hear, O my people, and I will assure thee, O Israel : if thou wilt hearken unto me.

10 There shall no strange god be in thee : neither shalt thou worship any other god.

11 I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt : open thy mouth wide, and I shall fill it.

12 But my people would not hear my voice : and Israel would not obey me.

13 So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust : and let them follow their own imaginations.

14 O that my people would have hearkened unto me : for if Israel had walked in my ways,

15 I should soon have put down their enemies : and turned my hand against their adversaries.

16 The haters of the Lord should have been found liars : but their time should have endured for ever.

17 He should have fed them also with the finest wheat-flour : and with honey out of the stony rock should I have satisfied thee.

Ver. 3. *blow up the trumpet, &c.*] In the Jewish Church, notice was given of feasts, fasts, &c., by sound of trumpet, *Joel* ii. 15. All the new moons, or beginnings of months, were observed in this manner, *Numb.* x. 1—10. But on the September new moon, or first day of the seventh month, was kept a great festival, called "the feast of trumpets." *Levit.* xxiii. 24, which is probably the feast alluded to in this Psalm.

Ver. 4. *a statute*] An appointment or ordinance.

Ver. 5. *in Joseph*] For the people of Joseph. *Psalm* lxxx. 1.—*for a testimony:*] As a witness and remembrance of the Lord's mercy.—*a strange language.*] The language of the Egyptians, which was strange to the Israelites, that is, not understood by them.

Ver. 6. *I eased*] These words, to the end of the Psalm, represent the Lord Himself as speaking.—*his shoulder from the burden:*] Laid on by the task-masters of Pharaoh. *Exod.* iii.—*making the pots.*] See *Psalm* lxviii. 13.

Ver. 7. *as the storm fell upon thee.*] Either at Mount Sinai, *Exod.* xix. 16, or at the destruction of Pharaoh and his army. *Exod.* xiv. 24, 25. *Psalm* lxxviii. 49.

Ver. 8. *the waters of strife.*] The waters of Meribah, which name signifies "strife." *Exod.* xvii. 6, 7.

Ver. 10. *no strange god*] No idol. The Lord was their God; idols were strange, did not properly belong to them. *Deut.* xxxii. 12.

Ver. 11. *open thy mouth wide,*] For my instruction and blessings. I will satisfy thy desires, be they ever so large.

Ver. 13. *let them follow*] A greater punishment the Lord cannot inflict upon a wilful and disobedient people, than to withdraw His grace, and let them follow their own foolish choice of evil, "their own imaginations."

Ver. 14. *O that my people*] The Lord's tender compassion is here described by His mourning over the folly and rebellion of Israel. Just so did the Lord Jesus mourn over the same people, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," &c. See *Matt.* xxiii. 37.—*if Israel had walked in my ways,*] This proves that it was entirely Israel's own fault, that God's favour was withdrawn; and it proves that the ruin of sinners is altogether the effect of their own pride

and obstinacy in resisting the teaching and the grace of God.

Ver. 16. *have been found liars :*] See on *Psalm* lxvi. 2. —*their time*] The time, that is, the prosperity and happiness of Israel, should have continued without interruption.

Ver. 17. *with the finest wheat-flour—with honey*] Israel should have enjoyed all the blessings, both earthly and spiritual, of the promised land; of which blessings an abundance of the best corn and the best honey were an emblem or sign. *Deut.* xxii. 13.

We should esteem it not only our bounden duty, but a very great favour, and honour, and privilege, to keep holy days unto the Lord, and to attend upon all His ordinances; to abound in praise and thanksgiving for His particular mercies, and to encourage one another to these pleasant services, gladly embracing every opportunity for them, and ready whenever our Church calls us to perform such sacred duties; at Christmas, at Easter, at Whitsuntide, and on all occasions. Many people, in these days, are sadly neglectful in this matter; and it shows that they have neither any proper regard for the Church, nor any proper sense of God's great mercies and blessings. The pious soul is thankful for every such invitation, and accepts it with delight. For the Lord is the strength of His people, and all the worship we can render is far beneath His greatness and goodness, and our vast obligations to Him. The neglect of our holy days, whether for spiritual feasting or fasting, proves that we, like Israel of old, are unmindful both of God's favour and our own sinfulness; and as we forget and forsake our duty, God will forsake us, as He did Israel. We see from this psalm, what Israel might have been by love and obedience; we know what they were and are—cast out of God's favour, and "children of wrath." They thought highly of themselves, of their religious knowledge, and their forms of worship, and had no fear of falling into destruction; they said, "I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart." *Deut.* xxix. 19. Be not we like unto them; "Be not high-minded, but fear." *Rom.* xi. 20. May the Lord incline our hearts to obey every holy call, and to walk in His ways, that so our souls may be satisfied with those unspeakable blessings, which flow from the "rock of salvation," that we may "eat of the true bread, and live for ever!" *John* vi. 58.

QUESTIONS.

Blow up the trumpet?—In the new moon?—Our solemn feast day; what feast?—A statute?—In Joseph for a testimony?—A strange language?—Explain ver. 6.—The storm fell upon thee?—The waters of strife?—No strange god?—Open thy mouth wide?—O that my people, &c.; give a similar passage.—If Israel, &c.; what does this prove?—Should have been found liars?—Their time; whose?—Wheat-flour—honey?—What may we learn from this Psalm?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM LXXXII.

A charge and warning to magistrates, and all in authority, to do their duty, as the servants of God.

1 God standeth in the congregation of princes: he is a Judge among gods.
2 How long will ye give wrong judgement: and accept the persons of the ungodly.
3 Defend the poor and fatherless: see that such as are in need and necessity have right.
4 Deliver the out-cast and poor: save them from the hand of the ungodly.
5 They will not be learned nor understand, but walk on still in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.
6 I have said, Ye are gods: and ye are all the children of the Most Highest.
7 But ye shall die like men: and fall like one of the princes.
8 Arise, O God, and judge thou the earth: for thou shalt take all heathen to thine inheritance.

Ver. 1. *standeth*] Standeth up to judge and give sentence, *Isa.* iii. 13, 14. He is the Head and Judge of every assembly; high and low, rich and poor, are equally accountable to Him. *Psalm* ii. 10, 11. "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." 2 *Cor.* v. 10.—*among gods.*] Kings, magistrates, judges, are called gods, because they are "God's ministers," "ordained by God," and acting by His authority and in His name. They may be said to represent Him as governor and judge. See ver. 6, 7, and *Rom.* xiii. 1—7.

Ver. 2. *accept the persons*] Favour the ungodly on

account of their persons, because they are rich or great; being led by fear, or bribed by money, to give wrong judgment.

Ver. 3. *the poor and fatherless:*] "Seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." *Isa.* i. 17.

Ver. 5. *will not be learned*] Will not learn the rules of justice, but go on in the darkness of their corrupt ways.—*the foundations of the earth*] The principles of good order and good government are entirely perverted and forsaken. *Psalm* xi. 3.

Ver. 6, 7.] Although I have said, "Ye are gods," though I have called you by this great title, and described you as "children" of God, (deriving your being, as rulers, from Him,) yet remember, that ye are, after all, but weak and mortal men; the honour given you is on account of your office and station, and not because you are in yourselves above other people; ye shall die as the poorest and meanest do, and just as heathen princes have died before you.

Ver. 8. *judge thou*] Since earthly judges are so corrupt, take Thou the matter into thine own hand. There is also, in this verse, a view to the Messiah's reign of righteousness and judgment, *Psalm* lxvii. 4. *Isa.* ix. 7; especially in the latter part of the verse, which foretells the call and conversion of the heathen to the Gospel. *Psalm* xxii. 27, 28.

It is the duty of all persons, who bear rule over others, to remember that they hold office not for themselves, but for the Most High God, who will one day say to every one of them, "Give an account of thy stewardship." *Luke* xvi. 2. We are indeed all of us stewards, all entrusted with our several talents, whether more or fewer; but people in authority, magistrates, judges, masters, parents, teachers, are especially bound to think of the weighty charge committed to them, and to do equal justice, and show equal kindness to all God's people, without fear or favour: instead of being lifted up with pride, let them feel the more humble from a sense of their own weakness and unworthiness, and of the judgment to which they will be called; "for unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be

required." *Luke* xii. 48. But though rulers and governors should fail in their duty, we must still obey them in all things lawful, when their commands do not oppose the will or word of God. Our blessed Lord taught obedience even to a heathen king: "Render, therefore, unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's." *Matt.* xxii. 21. Our duty is to pray for them: "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority: that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 *Tim.* ii. 1—4.

QUESTIONS.

God standeth, &c.?—Among gods?—Accept the persons, &c.?—They will not be learned?—All the foundations, &c.?—Explain ver. 6.—Like one of the princes?—To whom does ver. 8 apply?—What should governors remember?—What is our duty to them?

PSALM LXXXIII.

Ten nations had gathered and conspired together against Israel: the Psalmist here prays for their destruction, in order to the Church's deliverance and God's glory.

1 Hold not thy tongue, O God, keep not still silence: refrain not thyself, O God.

2 For lo, thine enemies make a murmuring: and they that hate thee have lift up their head.

3 They have imagined craftily against thy people: and taken counsel against thy secret ones.

4 They have said, Come, and let us root them out, that they be no more a people: and that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.

5 For they have cast their heads together with one consent: and are confederate against thee;

6 The tabernacles of the Edomites, and the Ishmaelites: the Moabites and Hagarenes;

7 Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek: the Philistines, with them that dwell at Tyre.

8 Assur also is joined with them: and have holpen the children of Lot.

9 But do thou to them as unto the Midianites: unto Si-

sera, and unto Jabin at the brook of Kison;

10 Who perished at Endor: and became as the dung of the earth.

11 Make them and their princes like Oreb and Zeb: yea, make all their princes like as Zeba and Salmana;

12 Who say, Let us take to ourselves: the houses of God in possession.

13 O my God, make them like unto a wheel: and as the stubble before the wind;

14 Like as the fire that burneth up the wood: and as the flame that consumeth the mountains.

15 Persecute them even so with thy tempest: and make them afraid with thy storm.

16 Make their faces ashamed, O Lord: that they may seek thy name.

17 Let them be confounded and vexed ever more and more: let them be put to shame, and perish.

18 And they shall know that thou, whose name is Jehovah: art only the most Highest over all the earth.

Ver. 1. *keep not still silence:*] Rebuke the enemy, come and help us. *Psalm* xxxv. 22.

Ver. 2. *make a murmuring:*] Raise a tumult against us.

Ver. 3. *imagined*] Contrived, plotted.—*thy secret ones.*] Those who are hidden under Thy protection, "under the shadow of thy wings." *Psalm* xvii. 8.

Ver. 5. *confederate*] Combined or leagued together.

Ver. 6. *The tabernacles*] The tents; that is, the people dwelling in them.—*Edomites,*] Children of Edom, who sprang from Esau. *Gen.* xxv. 30.—*Ishmaelites:*] From Ishmael, son of Abraham by the *bondwoman.* *Gen.* xvi. 11—16.—*Moabites*] From Moab, one of the base-born sons of Lot. *Gen.* xix. 37.—*Hagarenes;*] From other sons of Hagar the bondwoman.

Ver. 7. *Gebal,*] The Gebalites, or Giblites, a people of Canaan. *Josh.* xiii. 5.—*Ammon,*] The Ammonites, from the other son of Lot. *Gen.* xix. 38.—*Amalek:*] The Amalekites, from Amalek the grandson of Esau. *Gen.* xxxvi. 15, 16.

Ver. 8. *Assur*] The Assyrians joined with the Moabites and Ammonites, children of Lot.

Ver. 9—11.] See *Judg.* iv.; vii. 25; viii.

Ver. 12. *the houses of God*] The houses of the people of God, which were under His protection.

Ver. 13—17.] These verses (like others of the same kind, see *Psalm* lxix.) may be considered as foretelling the destruction of the enemies.

Ver. 13. *like unto a wheel:*] By a "wheel" is here meant any light thing (as feather or thistle-down) which is whirled about by the wind. *Isa.* xvii. 13.

Ver. 14. *as the flame that consumeth the mountains.*] As the lightning strikes and destroys high things (such as the trees upon the mountains), so let them be, &c.

Ver. 15. *thy tempest—thy storm*] Thy wrath and fury.

Wicked people, though of very different interests, and strongly opposed to one another, are often found to agree and unite together against the holy cause and the holy people of God. Herod and Pilate, though before at variance and enmity, were made friends by their joint opposition to the Son of God, were "of one mind" to treat Jesus with contempt. *Luke* xxiii. 12. So it always has been, and so it always will be, as long as so great a portion of the world continues as it is, under the dominion of the prince of darkness, the enemy of God and man: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning." *John* viii. 44. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." *John* xv. 19, 20. But all enemies and persecutors who repent not, will be at length destroyed; while every true believer and servant, whose "life is hid with Christ in God," *Col.* iii. 3, shall be perfectly safe under His unseen protection; and "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." *Col.* iii. 4.

QUESTIONS.

Hold not Thy tongue, &c.?—Make a murmuring?—Have imagined?—Thy secret ones?—Confederate?—How many nations were leagued together?—Who were they?—The houses of God?—Like unto a wheel?—The flame that consumeth the mountains?—Thy tempest?—Thy storm?—Who is the great cause of the hatred of the world against God and His people?—How did our Lord describe him?

PSALM LXXXIV.

In this, as in Psalm xlii., *the Author (whoever he was) complains of his sad condition, in being driven from the courts and worship of God at Jerusalem; describes the happiness of waiting upon the Lord in His tabernacles, and longs for his own return to them.*

1 O how amiable are thy dwellings : thou Lord of hosts!
2 My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord : my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.
3 Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house, and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young : even thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.
4 Blessed are they that dwell in thy house : they will be alway praising thee.
5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee : in whose heart are thy ways.
6 Who going through the vale of misery use it for a well : and the pools are filled with water.
7 They will go from strength to strength : and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Sion.
8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer : hearken, O God of Jacob.
9 Behold, O God our defender : and look upon the face of thine anointed.
10 For one day in thy courts : is better than a thousand.
11 I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God : than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness.
12 For the Lord God is a light and defence : the Lord will give grace and worship ; and no good thing shall he withhold from them that live a godly life.
13 O Lord God of hosts : blessed is the man that putteth his trust in thee.

Ver. 1. *how amiable*] How lovely and excellent.—*thy dwellings :*] Where Thou dwellest in the ark. *Psalm* xxvi. 8.

Ver. 3. *the sparrow — the swallow*] He envies the birds, which could build their nests on Sion, near the altars of God.

Ver. 5. *in whose heart are thy ways.*] Who loves the way that leadeth to Thy tabernacles. An allusion is made to persons travelling to Jerusalem to worship.

Ver. 6. *the vale of misery*] "The valley of Baca." *Bib. Vers.* But the sense of this verse may be as follows: "Blessed is the man, who, though he comes afar off, and has to travel through a barren and thirsty vale, yet is so full of the joy that awaits him in Thy courts, that his dreary journey is as pleasant to him, as if he found a well in the dry land to quench his thirst; and as if the almost empty and corrupt pools were filled with fresh water." *Isa.* xli. 18.

Ver. 7. *from strength to strength:*] Gathering fresh vigour as they go forward, and draw nearer to the holy city.—*unto the God of gods*] The happy multitude of those who have their liberty to go, appear at length in the presence of the great Jehovah at His tabernacle.

Ver. 9. *of thine anointed.*] If this Psalm was not composed by David, it was composed by one (or in the name of one) who was a priest or king. See *Psalm* ii. 2, on the word *anointed.*

Ver. 10. *better than a thousand.*] Than a thousand days spent elsewhere.

Ver. 11. *a door-keeper—than to dwell*] Rather be at the door of God's house, than *dwell within* any habitation of those who know not God.

Ver. 12. *worship:*] Honour and glory.

Ver. 13. *blessed is the man that putteth his trust in thee.*] Blessed and comforted, however he may be persecuted and distressed. See 2 *Cor.* iv. 6—9.

To every spiritual-minded, pious, righteous servant of God, few things afford greater uneasiness and concern, than his being deprived of the opportunities of attending the House of his God; and this makes him the more thankful and constant in his worship while he has the power; so that if by sickness, or any other means, he should be kept away from the courts of the Lord, his heart may still be there; that his sorrow may not be increased by the bitter remembrance of past neglect. The delight in God's service upon earth is a foretaste of the joy of heaven: the rest of the Sabbath a foretaste of the rest in God for ever. Not only are they happy who have arrived at heaven, they also are happy who have set out, with the desire of their

souls, in the search and pursuit of that felicity; and who, making the Lord their strength, walk with pleasure in His ways, and approve them in their hearts. They may have to pass through many a valley of weeping and many a thirsty desert; but "wells" of salvation shall be opened for them, and consolations sent for their support. The journey itself, and the prospect of its happy end, will revive their spirits; they shall "go on from strength to strength" with increasing cheerfulness and confidence, till they safely reach the holy city; to appear before God, to "see Him as He is," and to "be like Him" for evermore. 1 *John* iii. 2. In the mean time they feel and acknowledge that one day spent with God is better than a thousand spent with the world; and that the meanest office or dwelling in God's service is better than the proudest honours and the grandest palaces of ungodly men. The Lord is their "light" in the darkest path, even "the Sun of Righteousness," their blessed Saviour, who is "the light of the world:" the Lord is their "defence," a shield in every battle, and amid "all the fiery darts of the wicked." *Eph.* vi. 16. "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" 1 *Pet.* iii. 13. And into the heavenly city no enemy shall come, "no thief break through nor steal," *Matt.* vi. 20: there "the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." *Isa.* lx. 19.

QUESTIONS.

How amiable?—Thy dwellings?—What of the sparrow and swallow?—In whose heart are Thy ways?—Explain ver. 6, 7. —Better than a thousand?—I had rather be—what?—What is the Lord God?—What will He give?—What will He not withhold?

PSALM LXXXV.

The Psalmist appeals to God, on the ground of His past mercies, to deliver His Church and people from the miserable bondage under which they had lain so long. And, in the latter part of the Psalm, he describes the happy consequence of such deliverance in words which properly foreshow our redemption by Jesus Christ. Hence, this Psalm is appointed to be used on Christmas-day.

1 Lord, thou art become gracious unto thy land: thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob.

2 Thou hast forgiven the offence of thy people : and covered all their sins.

3 Thou hast taken away all thy displeasure : and turned thyself from thy wrathful indignation.

4 Turn us then, O God our Saviour : and let thine anger cease from us.

5 Wilt thou be displeased at us for ever : and wilt thou stretch out thy wrath from one generation to another?

6 Wilt thou not turn again, and quicken us : that thy people may rejoice in thee?

7 Show us thy mercy, O Lord : and grant us thy salvation.

8 I will hearken what the Lord God will say concerning me : for he shall speak peace unto his people, and to his saints, that they turn not again.

9 For his salvation is nigh them that fear him : that glory may dwell in our land.

10 Mercy and truth are met together : righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

11 Truth shall flourish out of the earth : and righteousness hath looked down from heaven.

12 Yea, the Lord shall show loving-kindness : and our land shall give her increase.

13 Righteousness shall go before him : and he shall direct his going in the way.

Ver. 1—3.] These verses relate either to some former mercy and deliverance (as of Israel from Egypt), or to a present deliverance, which had been begun, but was not completed.

Ver. 1. *the captivity*] The state of bondage.

Ver. 2. *and covered all their sins.*] Hast pardoned them, *Psalm* xxxii. 1, as shown by removing the punishment which was sent on their account. *Matt.* ix. 5, 6.

Ver. 4. *Turn us*] From our bondage and our sins. Make us to return to Thy services and Thy favour. Thou declarest Thyself our God, make us indeed Thy people.

Ver. 6. *quicken us :*] Revive us, put new life into us. The "quick and the dead" are the living and the dead.

Ver. 8.] I will hearken, for I am assured that He will speak to His people in words of comfort and peace.—*that they turn not again.*] To disobedience, and so to bondage and distress.

Ver. 9. *his salvation is nigh them that fear him :*] This verse very fitly shows forth the great Redeemer, whose

mercy "is on them that fear him from generation to generation." *Luke* i. 50.

Ver. 10—13. *Mercy and truth, &c.*] When God restored the captive Jews, and poured His blessings upon them, He mercifully fulfilled His true and faithful promises: His righteous dealings toward them were in peace; they were corrected and humbled: and He was reconciled, and gave them peace with their enemies, and with one another. Truth appeared abundantly, springing forth like grass from the earth; and God manifested to them His good pleasure and His righteous will; their land was fruitful, and they were taught and led by God in the paths of righteousness. But these four last verses of the Psalm clearly direct us to the Gospel, to that more glorious time, in which the truth of the promises was fully shown by the mercy of God in sending the Redeemer; by whose great sacrifice of Himself the righteousness and holiness of God were satisfied, and there came "on earth peace, good will toward men." *Luke* ii. 14. Truth sprang forth and flourished upon earth by the Gospel of Christ, who is "the way, and the truth, and the life," *John* xiv. 6: "And lo! a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." *Matt.* iii. 17. For His sake, "Our Father, which is in heaven, giveth good things to them that ask Him," *Matt.* vii. 7—11; and the land where the Gospel is preached produces an increase of righteousness and all "the fruits of the Spirit;" "That in the ages to come, He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness towards us through Jesus Christ." *Eph.* ii. 7. Christ was altogether righteous and good; declared beforehand to be "a just God and a Saviour," *Isa.* xlv. 21, and mercifully making "an highway—the way of holiness," (*Isa.* xxxv. 8,) for Himself and all His faithful people. See also *Luke* i. 74—79.

The great mercies and deliverances vouchsafed to Israel of old, foreshowed the redemption of mankind by Jesus Christ our Lord; they were frequently led captive by their enemies, and set free by the arm of the Lord; and thus they represented the

world lying "in the bonds of iniquity," "taken captive by Satan at his will," and set free by the same Almighty Saviour, who was the Lord of Israel. No language can be better suited to the sinner under the Gospel, than that which the Psalmist used for his people: "Turn us, then, O God our Saviour; and let thine anger cease from us:" turn us from sin, and thus from punishment, through faith in Thy prevailing name. "God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." *Acts* iii. 26. In Him "mercy and truth have met together;" He is "the Lord our Righteousness," (*Jer.* xxiii. 6,) and "the Prince of Peace." *Isa.* ix. 6. When man lost his righteousness, he lost his peace; in Christ they are both restored. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins." 1 *John* ii. 1. O let us fly for deliverance and righteousness and peace, to this Saviour of lost sinners, "of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write." *John* i. 45. Let us fly to Him without delay. "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call ye upon Him, while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." *Isa.* lv. 6, 7.

QUESTIONS.

Turned away the captivity of Jacob?—Covered all their sins?—Quicken us?—That they turn not again—to what?—Explain ver. 10—12.

THE SEVENTEENTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM LXXXVI.

In the Bible we find this Psalm entitled a "Prayer of David:" it is not known on what occasion it was composed; but he prays for help in some sore trouble, and for spiritual blessings.

1 Bow down thine ear, O Lord, and hear me: for I am poor, and in misery.

2 Preserve thou my soul, for I am holy : my God, save thy servant that putteth his trust in thee.

3 Be merciful unto me, O Lord : for I will call daily upon thee.

4 Comfort the soul of thy servant : for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

5 For thou, Lord, art good and gracious : and of great mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

6 Give ear, Lord, unto my prayer : and ponder the voice of my humble desires.

7 In the time of my trouble I will call upon thee : for thou hearest me.

8 Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord : there is not one that can do as thou doest.

9 All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship thee, O Lord : and shall glorify thy name.

10 For thou art great, and doest wondrous things : thou art God alone.

11 Teach me thy way, O Lord, and I will walk in thy truth : O knit my heart unto thee, that I may fear thy name.

12 I will thank thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart : and will praise thy name for evermore.

13 For great is thy mercy toward me : and thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell.

14 O God, the proud are risen against me : and the congregations of naughty men have sought after my soul, and have not set thee before their eyes.

15 But thou, O Lord God, art full of compassion and mercy : long-suffering, plenteous in goodness and truth.

16 O turn thee then unto me, and have mercy upon me : give thy strength unto thy servant, and help the son of thine handmaid.

17 Show some token upon me for good, that they who hate me may see it, and be ashamed : because thou, Lord, hast holpen me, and comforted me.

Ver. 1. *poor, and in misery.*] A deep sense of want and distress is one of the sure grounds for prayer.

Ver. 2. *for I am holy :*] I am thy servant, ver. 16. *Psalm* cxvi. 14; one who is set apart for Thy holy worship and service. It answers to the word *saint*, by which the Christian is frequently called. *Rom.* i. 7; xvi. 15. David, therefore, does not mean to boast, by describing himself as "holy," but to urge his humble plea, on the ground of his being one of God's covenanted people, and appearing before

Him with all godly sincerity. Thus St. Paul, under a deep sense of his unworthiness, calls himself, "less than the least of all saints;" the lowest of all in his own esteem, but yet a saint, and of the number of God's holy ones. So every Christian, however "poor in spirit," must look for acceptance with God. We must be His saints upon earth, if we would be "numbered with his saints in glory everlasting."

Ver. 6. *ponder*] Attend to, so as to give a favourable answer.

Ver. 8. *the gods*] The heathen idols.

Ver. 9. *all nations*] This verse foretels the spreading of the knowledge and service of the one true God over all the earth; the glorious time "when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." *John* iv. 23.

Ver. 11. *and I will walk*] This is the proper object and end of all teaching, to walk in the ways of truth; and all who heartily desire so to walk, and pray on account of that desire, will certainly be taught of God. *John* vii. 17.—*knit*] Unite my very soul to Thee, that we may be one. *John* xvii. 21—23. Thus all true Christians are "one with Christ, and Christ with them." *Communion Service.*

Ver. 13. *the nethermost hell.*] The lowest hell; the depth of the grave, or the invisible world.

Ver. 14. *of naughty men*] Of wicked and violent men. —*my soul,*] My life.—*not set thee before their eyes.*] Have had no fear of Thee, nor thought of Thy judgment.

Ver. 16. *the son of thine handmaid.*] One who is entirely Thine own, as the son of a handmaid or (female slave) in a family was the property of her master.

Ver. 17. *some token*] Show me some clear and open sign of Thy favour, that all around may see it, and be convinced and fear Thy name.

All prayer is founded on a sense of our own wants, and of God's power and goodness to supply them. It is not enough to be in want; we must feel it, before we can be led to earnest prayer. Many sick people are not aware of their disease or danger; and they cannot be expected to fly to a physician; many persons who have been brought up in poverty and rags, scarcely perceive the wretchedness of their condition, and there-

fore take little or no trouble to seek for better food and clothing. It is often so with sinners: they feel not the misery, see not the danger of their case; and thus they have no inducement to prayer, and cannot understand the need of it. The riches and pleasures and comforts of this life are also a great snare and hindrance to many, and render them "past feeling" of their real condition: "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." *Rev.* iii. 17. Happy, then, and blessed beyond measure, are those trials and afflictions which bring us to a knowledge of ourselves, which bring us on our knees before the throne of grace, to make unto the Lord a full confession of our own sinfulness and weakness, and to declare our only dependence upon His mercy and strength. But we must bow before Him with all godly sincerity, in the spirit of true repentance, as His holy people: we must continue in "instant prayer," praying to be "taught of God," only that we may walk with Him all the days of our life; that our hearts may be united with Him in a holy bond, which shall never be broken; for thus "the Lord will give ear unto our prayer." And praised be His mercy, that we are yet in the land of the living; that in the midst of all our undutifulness and forgetfulness, we have been spared again and again, to make our peace with Him, and return to His favour. O let us bear thankfully in mind to whose great mercy we are indebted for all these blessings: "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." *Rom.* v. 1. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." *Heb.* vii. 25.

QUESTIONS.

State the grounds upon which David prays to be heard.—For I am holy?—Ponder?—Among the gods?—Why should we pray God to teach us?—O knit my heart unto thee?—From the nethermost hell?—Naughty men?—Have not set thee before their eyes?—The son of Thine handmaid?—Show some token upon me?

PSALM LXXXVII.

The praises of Jerusalem, and the fore-shewing of her future glory.

1 Her foundations are upon the holy hills: the Lord loveth the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

2 Very excellent things are spoken of thee : thou city of God.

3 I will think upon Rahab and Babylon : with them that know me.

4 Behold ye the Philistines also : and they of Tyre, with the Morians; lo, there was he born.

5 And of Sion it shall be reported that he was born in her : and the Most High shall stablish her.

6 The Lord shall rehearse it when he writeth up the people : that he was born there.

7 The singers also and trumpeters shall he rehearse : all my fresh springs shall be in thee.

Ver. [1. *Her foundations*] The foundations of the city and temple. In the *Bible Version* it is "*His* foundations," the foundations of the city of God.—*the holy hills :*] Mount Sion, which was made up of several smaller mountains.—*the dwellings of Jacob.*] All the dwellings of God's people are well pleasing to Him, but especially Jerusalem, called here "the gates of Sion."

Ver. 3. *I will think upon*] I will remember, or I will mention, many heathen places, such as "Rahab and Babylon," in the number of those that "know me;" that is, they shall be brought to the true knowledge and service of Me, and to enjoy the privileges of My holy city. *Rahab* signifies Egypt: and the *Morians*, in ver. 4, were probably in the land of Cush or Ethiopia. *Psalm* lxviii. 31.

Ver. 4. *was he born.*] These words (which are found in ver. 4—6) occasion a great difficulty. The sense may, perhaps, be this: ver. 4, "It shall be said of each of these heathen countries, that he (or rather *it*) was born at Jerusalem;" *that is*, is made the heir, as if by birth, of the spiritual and heavenly blessings which belong to God's own city. 5. And of Sion (Jerusalem) it shall be reported, that he (each of these heathen people) was born and blessed in her. 6. When the Lord numbereth His own, it shall appear in the register, that these nations are thus born at Jerusalem. But, possibly, the words "he was born" may refer to the Messiah.

Ver. 7.] When this great honour comes to Jerusalem, it shall be made a matter of joyful celebration; "singers and trumpeters" shall be there; and this shall be their song, "All my fresh springs (all my comfort and joy) shall be in thee and from thee, O Jerusalem." Or, if we take the

other sense given in the former note, it may mean, "All my comfort and joy shall be in thee, O Lord Messiah."

Sion of old was a pattern of the Church of God in all ages, a pattern of the Church of Christ, which resteth upon "foundations" never to be moved, upon the everlasting hills: it resteth upon Himself, "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 *Cor.* iii. 11. Into the bosom of this Church shall all nations in due time be brought, and be numbered with the faithful and elect of God. O that of this happy number we may be found! and in order that it may be so, let us pour forth our daily prayers, let us use our daily diligence, let us make it our one great object and end. Blessed will be that man, who shall find his "name written in the Lamb's book of life." *Rev.* xxi. 27. And there can be no blessing without it: woe to thee, my soul, if thou be not found there: seek the Lord Jesus, thy Saviour: seek His face evermore; in Him is the well-spring of life—of present peace and joy, of eternal happiness and glory: "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name." *Psalm* ciii. 1. Thou art "come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." *Heb.* xii. 22; "wherefore give diligence to make thy calling and election sure." 2 *Pet.* i. 10.

QUESTIONS.

Her foundations—whose?—The holy hills?—The gates of Sion?—I will think upon Rahab, &c.?—With them that know Me?—That he was born there?—Explain verse 7.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

This Psalm is full of sorrowful complaints, and may be considered as the language of the "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," of the blessed Jesus in His terrible endurings. It is therefore used on Good Friday.

1 O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee: O let my prayer enter into thy presence, incline thine ear unto my calling.

2 For my soul is full of trouble: and my life draweth nigh unto hell.

3 I am counted as one of them that go down into the

pit : and I have been even as a man that hath no strength.

4 Free among the dead, like unto them that are wounded, and lie in the grave : who are out of remembrance, and are cut away from thy hand.

5 Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit : in a place of darkness, and in the deep.

6 Thine indignation lieth hard upon me : and thou hast vexed me with all thy storms.

7 Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me : and made me to be abhorred of them.

8 I am so fast in prison : that I cannot get forth.

9 My sight faileth for very trouble : Lord, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched forth my hands unto thee.

10 Dost thou show wonders among the dead : or shall the dead rise up again, and praise thee?

11 Shall thy loving-kindness be showed in the grave : or thy faithfulness in destruction?

12 Shall thy wondrous works be known in the dark : and thy righteousness in the land where all things are forgotten?

13 Unto thee have I cried, O Lord : and early shall my prayer come before thee.

14 Lord, why abhorrest thou my soul : and hidest thou thy face from me?

15 I am in misery, and like unto him that is at the point to die : even from my youth up thy terrors have I suffered with a troubled mind.

16 Thy wrathful displeasure goeth over me : and the fear of thee hath undone me.

17 They came round about me daily like water : and compassed me together on every side.

18 My lovers and friends hast thou put away from me : and hid mine acquaintance out of my sight.

Ver. 2. *unto hell.*] Unto the grave, the state of the departed. Thus our Lord in the garden, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." *Matt.* xxvi. 38.

Ver. 4. *Free among the dead,*] Free from the concerns of this life, (cut off and cast away,) as those who are numbered among the dead.—*that are wounded,*] Wounded and slain.

Ver. 5. *pit—darkness—deep.*] See on *Psalm* lxix. 1.

Ver. 6. *thy storms.*] Of trouble and sorrow.

Ver. 7. *put away mine acquaintance*] Thus it was with Christ: "all his disciples forsook him and fled." *Matt.* xxvi. 56. See also *Luke* xxiii. 49.—*abhorred*] Hated; "an abomination to them." *Bib. Vers.*

Ver. 8. *so fast in prison:*] "I am shut up," *Bib. Vers.;* surrounded and hindered by my enemies, as if I were in a prison.

Ver. 9. *stretched forth my hands*] In prayer.

Ver. 10—12.] The Psalmist does not mean here to say or imply, that the dead will not "rise up again;" he only means that they cannot rise up to praise God upon earth; that a man once dead can receive no more the blessings of God's providence; no more be made an example before men of the Lord's "loving-kindness," and "faithfulness," and "righteousness;" do no more good in the world, which he was so desirous of doing: and therefore he prays for life, on account of God's glory, and the benefit of His people. See *Psalm* xxx. 9, 10. And these verses when applied to Christ, may be understood as pleading for the resurrection of Himself and His followers in order to God's glory. "Can the dead, if they are to continue in the state of death, rise up and praise Thee? they must be called to life again, and thus 'come forth' from their graves."

Ver. 12. *in the land where all things are forgotten?*] In the dark grave, where the things *of earth* are thought of no more.

Ver. 14. *hidest thou thy face*] See on *Psalm* xxii. 1. The xxii. lxix. and lxxxviii. *Psalms* are very similar to each other.

Ver. 16. *goeth over me:*] Like a wave of the sea, overwhelming me with sorrow.

Ver. 18.] See on ver. 7.

How continually are we informed and reminded in the book of Psalms of the afflictions which have been endured by the servants of God in former ages, to try their faith and constancy, and teach them to depend entirely and only upon the sure protection of Jehovah! And as long as we live in a world of sin and sorrow, we must expect more or less of the same painful experience. Let us then "sit down and count the cost," *Luke* xiv. 28, that we may be prepared for changes and troubles, and not, when they come, be surprised or thrown off our guard, and be moved to murmur or impatience. "There hath no temptation (no trial) taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 *Cor.* x. 13. Above all, let us be "looking unto Jesus, the author and

finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." *Heb.* xii. 2. We cannot possibly suffer for ourselves so much as He, the innocent Lamb, suffered for our sake; let us therefore be content to follow Him in His way to glory; that as He, after "taking up his cross," and dying upon it, "rose again from the dead," so He may wake the sleeping dust of us His faithful disciples; and call us from the grave, to sing the "wondrous works" of Jehovah through the ages of eternity.

QUESTIONS.

Unto hell?—What petition of our Lord was similar to that in verse 2?—Free among the dead?—That are wounded?—With all Thy storms?—Apply verse 7 to Christ.—In prison?—Stretched forth my hands?—Explain verses 10—12.—In the land where all things are forgotten?—Hidest thou Thy face?—Displeasure goeth over me?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM LXXXIX.

The greatness and goodness of Jehovah, and His covenanted mercies to David, are largely set forth; and in language which very clearly points to the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ: the Psalm is therefore read on Christmas-day. *—The latter part of it speaks of some dangerous enemies who had troubled the kingdom.*

1 My song shall be alway of the loving-kindness of the Lord: with my mouth will I ever be showing thy truth from one generation to another.

2 For I have said, Mercy shall be set up for ever: thy truth shalt thou stablish in the heavens.

3 I have made a covenant with my chosen: I have sworn unto David my servant;

4 Thy seed will I stablish for ever: and set up thy throne from one generation to another.

5 O Lord, the very heavens shall praise thy wondrous works: and thy truth in the congregation of the saints.

6 For who is he among the clouds: that shall be compared unto the Lord?

7 And what is he among

the gods : that shall be like unto the Lord?

8 God is very greatly to be feared in the council of the saints : and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him.

9 O Lord God of hosts, who is like unto thee : thy truth, most mighty Lord, is on every side.

10 Thou rulest the raging of the sea : thou stillest the waves thereof when they arise.

11 Thou hast subdued Egypt, and destroyed it : thou hast scattered thine enemies abroad with thy mighty arm.

12 The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine : thou hast laid the foundation of the round world, and all that therein is.

13 Thou hast made the north and the south : Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.

14 Thou hast a mighty arm : strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.

15 Righteousness and equity are the habitation of thy seat : mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

16 Blessed is the people, O Lord, that can rejoice in thee : they shall walk in the light of thy countenance.

17 Their delight shall be daily in thy name : and in thy righteousness shall they make their boast.

18 For thou art the glory of their strength : and in thy loving-kindness thou shalt lift up our horns.

19 For the Lord is our defence : the Holy One of Israel is our king.

20 Thou speakest sometime in visions unto thy saints, and saidst : I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people.

21 I have found David my servant : with my holy oil have I anointed him.

22 My hand shall hold him fast : and my arm shall strengthen him.

23 The enemy shall not be able to do him violence : the son of wickedness shall not hurt him.

24 I will smite down his foes before his face : and plague them that hate him.

25 My truth also and my mercy shall be with him : and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

26 I will set his dominion also in the sea : and his right hand in the floods.

27 He shall call me, Thou art my Father : my God, and my strong salvation.

28 And I will make him my first-born : higher than the kings of the earth.

29 My mercy will I keep for him for evermore : and my covenant shall stand fast with him.

30 His seed also will I make to endure for ever : and his throne as the days of heaven.

31 But if his children forsake my law : and walk not in my judgements;

32 If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments : I will visit their of-

fences with the rod, and their sin with scourges.

33 Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him : nor suffer my truth to fail.

34 My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips : I have sworn once by my holiness, that I will not fail David.

35 His seed shall endure for ever : and his seat is like as the sun before me.

36 He shall stand fast for evermore as the moon : and as the faithful witness in heaven.

37 But thou hast abhorred and forsaken thine anointed : and art displeased at him.

38 Thou hast broken the covenant of thy servant : and cast his crown to the ground.

39 Thou hast overthrown all his hedges : and broken down his strong holds.

40 All they that go by spoil him : and he is become a reproach to his neighbours.

41 Thou hast set up the right hand of his enemies : and made all his adversaries to rejoice.

42 Thou hast taken away the edge of his sword : and givest him not victory in the battle.

43 Thou hast put out his glory : and cast his throne down to the ground.

44 The days of his youth hast thou shortened : and covered him with dishonour.

45 Lord, how long wilt thou hide thyself, for ever : and shall thy wrath burn like fire?

46 O remember how short my time is : wherefore hast thou made all men for nought?

47 What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death : and shall he deliver his soul from the hand of hell?

48 Lord, where are thy old loving-kindnesses : which thou swarest unto David in. thy truth?

49 Remember, Lord, the rebuke that thy servants have : and how I do bear in my bosom the rebukes of many people;

50 Wherewith thine enemies have blasphemed thee, and slandered the footsteps of thine anointed : praised be the Lord for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

Ver. 2. *shalt thou stablish in the heavens.*] Shalt Thou make strong and lasting as the heavens.

Ver. 3. *a covenant with my chosen:*] A promise to, and agreement with, David, who was God's "chosen servant." *Psalm* lxxviii. 71. See 2 *Sam.* vii. 12. This was a sign, or type, of the everlasting covenant with Christ. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect (my chosen one) in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." *Isa.* xlii. 1.—The allusions to Christ, in this Psalm, are so plain and so frequent, that it is thought

unnecessary to remark them all: the attentive reader will discover them.

Ver. 4. *Thy seed*] Thy children, or people.

Ver. 5. *the saints.*] The holy ones. *Psalm* lxxxv. 8.

Ver. 6. *among the clouds:*] In the heavens.

Ver. 7. *among the gods:*] Among "the sons of the mighty." *Bible Vers.* the mighty angels.

Ver. 8. *the council*] The assembly.

Ver. 10. *of the sea:*] To rule and make quiet the stormy sea, is in the power of God alone. *Job* xxxviii. 11. *Jer.* v. 22. Thus did Christ manifest His godhead. *Matt.* viii. 26. See *Psalm* lxv. 7.

Ver. 12. *the round world,*] The world around, the whole world.

Ver. 13. *Tabor*] A mountain in the west of Judea.—*Hermon*] In the east. So it is "north and south, west and east," all quarters.

Ver. 14. *arm—hand—right hand.*] These denote the power of God.

Ver. 15. *thy seat:*] Thy throne is fixed in "righteousness and justice" as well as in power.—*go before thy face.*] Attend thee, make it known that Thou art present. *Psalm* xxv. 9.

Ver. 16. *in the light of thy countenance.*] *Psalm* iv. 7.

Ver. 17. *shall they make their boast.*] Shall they rejoice.

Ver. 18. *lift up our horns.*] Make us strong and powerful. *Psalm* xviii. 1.

Ver. 20. *in visions*] By wonderful appearances, or in a wonderful manner, declaring thy holy will.—*unto thy saints,*] Here it means *to Samuel.* 1 *Sam.* xv. xvi.—*laid help, &c.*] I have made him (David) able to give help. 1 *Sam.* xvi. 18.

Ver. 21. *anointed him.*] 1 *Sam.* xv. See also on *Psalm* ii. 2; xlv. 1.

Ver. 23. *the son of wickedness*] The wicked man, especially Saul. 2 *Sam.* xxii. 1. Thus did Christ triumph over the "wicked one," the devil.

Ver. 25. *his horn*] His power, as in ver. 18.

Ver. 26. *in the sea—in the floods.*] His dominion shall reach from the Mediterranean, or Great Sea, to the river

Euphrates. See *Psalm* lxxii. 8.—*his right hand*] His government.

Ver. 27. *Thou art my Father :*] How very strikingly does this apply to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who continually used the words "My Father!"

Ver. 28. *my first-born :*] David was so called, as being the head of that spiritual family, which God covenanted to bless; but Christ was the "first-born of every creature, the first-born from the dead, the Prince of the kings of the earth." *Col.* i. 15—18. *Rev.* i. 5. See also *Psalm* ii. 7.

Ver. 31—34.] In these verses God declares His purpose of correcting any particular portion of His Church of old, according to its offences; but still of preserving the faithful remnant, so that His promise to David should not fail: and thus it is with the Christian Church; if any part be corrupt, it shall be destroyed, *Rev.* xi. xix., but the Church shall stand for ever. *Matt.* xvi. 18; xxviii. 20.

Ver. 36. *as the faithful witness in heaven.*] As the rainbow. *Gen.* ix. 12, 13.

Ver. 37.] Here the Psalmist begins to lament the success of his enemies, who threatened him with destruction: he speaks in the name of the king; for it is not supposed that David himself composed this Psalm.

Ver. 38—44.] It seems that, for a time, the king had been driven from his throne. And this part of the Psalm may foreshow that short season, when the enemies of Christ thought they had succeeded against Him for ever, by putting Him to death, *Matt.* xxvii. 39—43; and His disciples thought so likewise, *Luke* xxiv. 21.

Ver. 39. *all his hedges :*] All his means of protection and safety. *Psalm* lxxx. 12.

Ver. 40. *spoil him :*] Rob and plunder him.

Ver. 45. *for ever :*] Shall it be for ever?

Ver. 46. *how short my time is :*] That, as I have not long to live, Thou wouldest turn and prosper me.—*for nought?*] For nothing, for vanity and trouble. *Psalm* xxxix. 6, 7.

Ver. 47. *of hell?*] Of the grave.

Ver. 49. *the rebukes*] The reproach.

Ver. 50. *slandered the footsteps*] Falsely accused the

conduct of Thy servant, their king; just as the Jews knowingly brought false accusations against Jesus.

The word of God can never fail, either in respect to His Church at large, or to particular members of that Church: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." *Matt.* xxiv. 35. "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" *Numb.* xxiii. 19. After David's day, the kingdom was sadly divided; and the people forsook the Lord, and went after their idols: for this they were severely punished, and were suffered to fall into the hands of their enemies; and it seemed as if the throne and the race of David were about to be cut off for ever. But the Lord preserved the Church and kingdom on account of the faithful few; even until the coming of Christ, "the promised seed," to sit "upon the throne of David;" to be the head for ever of that spiritual kingdom, in which the kingdom of David was to be completed. In the same manner will the Church of Christ be preserved to the end of time, till it be completed in heaven. Corrupt portions of it will fall into decay; corrupt members of it will perish; but the Church itself shall stand, however persecuted. And every true and faithful believer shall stand, even though he were to stand alone: he may suffer, indeed, amongst perishing sinners, and he may die the death of the body; but he shall be saved with an everlasting salvation: he shall be "more than conqueror through Christ that loved him." *Rom.* viii. 37. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." *Rev.* ii. 10.

QUESTIONS.

My song shall be alway, of what?—I have said, what?—Stablish in the heavens?—A covenant with My chosen?—With whom?—Thy seed?—Among the clouds?—Among the gods?—In the council?—The saints?—Explain ver. 10.—Of the round world?—Tabor and Hermon?—Thou hast a mighty arm?—Explain ver. 15.—Walk in the light of Thy countenance?—Make their boast?—Lift up our horns?—In visions?—Explain ver. 20.—The son of wickedness?—In the sea?—In the floods?—He shall call Me, what?—To whom may this be applied?—My first-born?—The faithful witness in heaven?—Cast his crown to the ground?—His hedges?—Spoil him?—All men for nought?—From the hand of hell?—Remember the rebuke?—Slandered the footsteps?

THE EIGHTEENTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM XC.

This Psalm is supposed to have been written by Moses, when God shortened the days of the murmuring Israelites in the wilderness. Numb. xiv. *It describes the short and fleeting state of man upon earth; and therefore is one of the proper Psalms in our* Funeral Service.

1 Lord, thou hast been our refuge: from one generation to another.

2 Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made: thou art God from everlasting, and world without end.

3 Thou turnest man to destruction: again thou sayest, Come again, ye children of men.

4 For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday: seeing that is past as a watch in the night.

5 As soon as thou scatterest them they are even as a sleep: and fade away suddenly like the grass.

6 In the morning it is green, and groweth up: but in the evening it is cut down, dried up, and withered.

7 For we consume away in thy displeasure: and are afraid at thy wrathful indignation.

8 Thou hast set our misdeeds before thee: and our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

9 For when thou art angry, all our days are gone: we bring our years to an end, as it were a tale that is told.

10 The days of our age are threescore years and ten; and though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years: yet is their strength then but labour and sorrow: so soon passeth it away, and we are gone.

11 But who regardeth the power of thy wrath: for even thereafter as a man feareth, so is thy displeasure.

12 So teach us to number our days: that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

13 Turn thee again, O Lord, at the last: and be gracious unto thy servants.

14 O satisfy us with thy mercy, and that soon: so shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life.

15 Comfort us again, now after the time that thou hast plagued us: and for the years wherein we have suffered adversity.

16 Show thy servants thy work : and their children thy glory.
17 And the glorious majesty of the Lord our God be upon us : prosper thou the work of our hands upon us, O prosper thou our handy-work.

Ver. 1. *our refuge :*] "Our dwelling-place." *Bible Vers* After all our wanderings, Thou art our rest and our home.

Ver. 3. *Come again, ye children of men.*] Return to the dust, out of which ye were made. *Gen.* iii. 19.

Ver. 4. *For a thousand years*] Though the sentence which God passed upon Adam was not put in force immediately; though he, and many after him, lived many hundreds of years, what are they in the sight of God? What are they, when compared with eternity? they are but as a day. 2 *Pet.* iii. 8.—*seeing that is past*] A thousand years are even passed like a watch in the night. The night was divided into four portions of three hours each, beginning at six in the evening: these portions were called *watches. Mark* xiii. 35. *Luke* xii. 38.

Ver. 5, *as a sleep :*] They die as if they fell asleep. *Psalm* lxxiii. 19.

Ver. 7. *we consume away*] The Israelites were not suffered to set a foot on Canaan, till all the people of "twenty years old and upward" had died. *Numb.* xiv. 29. So they perished in God's anger. *Numb.* xvii. 12. And thus it is in the world; men are ever "consuming away under God's displeasure" at sin, afflicted with "divers diseases and sundry kinds of death."

Ver. 8. *our secret sins*] The sins which we hoped to have kept secret.

Ver. 11. *who regardeth, &c.*] Who considereth this as he ought to do? especially when he knows that according as Thou art feared and served, so will be Thy dealings with men.

Ver. 12. *to number our days :*] So to think on the shortness of our days.—*unto wisdom.*] To true wisdom, to the one thing needful, to a preparation for eternity.

Ver. 15. *after the time*] According to the time; let our future comfort and prosperity bear some proportion to our past afflictions.

Ver. 16. *Show thy servants*] Moses still prayed that

the people might see the glory of God in the land of Canaan.

Ver. 17. *our handy-work.*] The work which we have to do.

The favour and protection of God are the only suitable rest and comfort of the soul in this evil world; and God is become, in Christ Jesus, the refuge and dwelling-place to which we may repair, under all the storms that beat upon us. Our life is but "a pilgrimage," but a short journey; our "days but few and evil." *Gen.* xlvii. 9. "The voice said, Cry; and he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever." *Isa.* xl. 6—8. 1 *Pet.* i. 24, 25. Much, indeed, may the serious heart gather from the various images under which the shortness of life is represented to us in Scripture; as a journey or a span; as the grass, or the flower; as a watch in the night; as a dream, or a tale; as a smoke, or a vapour; as a vain shadow, or a thing of nought. We should, therefore, pray God to make us doubly careful and diligent in "working out our salvation;" to give us the grace of His Holy Spirit, that we may "work while it is day: for the night cometh when no man can work." *John* ix. 4. Since we "know not what shall be on the morrow," *James* iv. 14, O let us be wise to-day; "be wise and consider our latter end." *Deut.* xxxii. 29. This is the concern of every one of us, this our calling, this our work, 'so to pass through things temporal, that we may not lose the things eternal:' for this we were born into the world; and whoever he be that attends not, with all his heart and soul, to this one thing, "it had been good for that man if he had not been born." *Matt.* xxvi. 24. O let us take a lesson from disobedient Israel: how many of them were shut out of the promised land for their transgressions! The word of God declared it; and so it came to pass. So shall every unrepentant sinner be shut out of the heavenly Canaan, the land of eternal rest. O let us walk with God for our few short years on earth, that we may find an entrance into His everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

QUESTIONS.

Come again, ye children of men?—A watch in the night?—As a sleep?—To what else may life be compared?—To what does Isaiah compare it?—Repeat the passage.—To what does the 7th

verse allude?—Our secret sins?—Thereafter, &c. ver. 11?—To number our days?—For what purpose?—Explain ver. 15.—Thy work?—What work?—Who is supposed to have been the author of this Psalm?—What does it teach us?

PSALM XCI.

Here are described the safety and success of the righteous, under the care and protection of Jehovah. The Messiah is especially intended.

1 Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High: shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

2 I will say unto the Lord, Thou art my hope and my strong hold: my God, in him will I trust.

3 For he shall deliver thee from the snare of the hunter: and from the noisome pestilence.

4 He shall defend thee under his wings, and thou shalt be safe under his feathers: his faithfulness and truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

5 Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night: nor for the arrow that flieth by day;

6 For the pestilence that walketh in darkness: nor for the sickness that destroyeth in the noon-day.

7 A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand: but it shall not come nigh thee.

8 Yea, with thine eyes shalt thou behold: and see the reward of the ungodly.

9 For thou, Lord, art my hope: thou hast set thine house of defence very high.

10 There shall no evil happen unto thee: neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee: to keep thee in all thy ways.

12 They shall bear thee in their hands: that thou hurt not thy foot against a stone.

13 Thou shalt go upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet.

14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him up, because he hath known my Name.

15 He shall call upon me, and I will hear him: yea, I am with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and bring him to honour.

16 With long life will I satisfy him: and show him my salvation.

Ver. 1. *under the shadow*] *Psalm* xvii. 8. He that puts himself under the protection of the Almighty, shall be sure

to be safely preserved. These words are supposed to be spoken in the presence of some godly person, who immediately replies in ver. 2, "I will say unto the Lord," &c. Then the Psalmist addresses him again, ver. 3—8. Then this person says, ver. 9, "For thou, Lord, art my hope;" upon which the Psalmist again addresses him to the end of ver. 13. And the three last verses are the words of Jehovah, respecting this godly person, who in truth is the Messiah.

Ver. 3. *from the snare, &c.*] As the beast is delivered from the snare of the hunter. *Prov.* vi. 5.—*noisome*] Hurtful, dangerous.

Ver. 4. *wings—feathers:*] *Psalm* xvii. 8.—*shield and buckler.*] *Psalm* v. 13; xviii. 1.

Ver. 5. *nor for the arrow*] Nor for any weapon, nor any enemy.

Ver. 7. *it shall not, &c.*] The pestilence shall not come nigh thee. The righteous have often been delivered in a very remarkable manner; and when they are suffered to fall, they fall not under God's displeasure, but "are taken away from the evil to come." *Isa.* lvii. 1.

Ver. 8. *the reward*] The recompense, the punishment: thou shalt see it, but not share it.

Ver. 9. *thou hast set*] The godly person, in taking the Lord for his hope, has placed himself on high, beyond the reach of injury.

Ver. 11, 12.] These two verses, as relating to the Messiah, are quoted by Satan in his temptation of our blessed Lord. *Matt.* iv. 6.—*angels*] See *Psalm* xxxiv. 7. —*that thou hurt not, &c.*] Lest any harm happen to Thee.

Ver. 13.] Dangerous enemies are often represented by furious or venomous animals.—*upon the lion—the young lion*] *Psalm* xvii. 11, 12.—*adder:*] *Mark* xvi. 18.—*the dragon*] *Psalm* xliv. 20. *Isa.* xxvii. 1. *Rom.* xvi. 20.

Ver. 14. *hath known my Name.*] Hath acknowledged Me as his only help and stay. In these three last verses, Jehovah promises "blessing and honour" and eternal life to the Messiah: and through Him, to every righteous believer.

Every one must plainly perceive that in this world we are exposed to numberless evils and dangers, from which no prudence, or courage, or strength of our own, can possibly secure us: accidents come, diseases come, in ways which we cannot foresee: and in a moment we find ourselves plunged into trouble, of which we could not have the least expectation. But God knoweth and foreseeth all things; and He "ordereth all things both in heaven and in earth." What are called the gifts of fortune, what seems to be the work of chance, what is produced by the skill or exertion of man—all is subject to the control and government of the great Almighty God. Every good we enjoy comes forth from Him; and every evil that befals us arises from His permission, for some wise purpose. Man may be an instrument, but God is the author and mover of all; every being, and every thing in the world, is to be regarded as an instrument in His hand: and He makes "all things work together for the good" of His servants and the punishment of those who rebel against Him. Surely, then, we are strongly called upon, even on the ground of self-interest, to place ourselves under His providence and protection; to pray for the mighty aid of His Holy Spirit to help and defend us, and for the ministry of His Holy angels "to keep us in all our ways." Let us put our whole trust in that blessed Saviour, who assures His disciples "that the very hairs of their head are all numbered." *Matt.* x. 30. Thus we shall live with Him in this world as long as it is good for us, and He will take us at last to reign with Him for ever.

QUESTIONS.

From the snare of the hunter?—Noisome?—His wings and feathers?—Thy shield and buckler?—The arrow that flieth by day?—Whom shall He give charge over the righteous?—Explain ver. 13.—To whom is this Psalm addressed?—By whom is it quoted?—What do we learn from it?

PSALM XCII.

The duty of thanksgiving; described in the Bible as "A Psalm or Song for the Sabbath Day;" probably written by David.

1 It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord: and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most Highest;

2 To tell of thy loving-kindness early in the morning: and of thy truth in the night-season;

3 Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the lute: upon a loud instrument, and upon the harp.

4 For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy works: and I will rejoice in giving praise for the operations of thy hands.

5 O Lord, how glorious are thy works: thy thoughts are very deep.

6 An unwise man doth not well consider this: and a fool doth not understand it.

7 When the ungodly are green as the grass, and when all the workers of wickedness do flourish: then shall they be destroyed for ever; but thou, Lord, art the Most Highest for evermore.

8 For lo, thine enemies, O Lord, lo, thine enemies shall perish: and all the workers of wickedness shall be destroyed.

9 But mine horn shall be exalted like the horn of an unicorn: for I am anointed with fresh oil.

10 Mine eye shall also see his lust of mine enemies: and mine ear shall hear his desire of the wicked that arise up against me.

11 The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree: and shall spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus.

12 Such as are planted in the house of the Lord: shall flourish in the courts of the house of our God.

13 They also shall bring forth more fruit in their age: and shall be fat and well-liking.

14 That they may show how true the Lord my strength is: and that there is no unrighteousness in him.

Ver. 4. *for the operations of thy hands.*] For all that Thou hast done for me.

Ver. 6. *a fool*] A careless earthly man; a despiser of holy things; he can know nothing of "the deep things of God." Thus 1 *Cor.* ii. 14—16, "The natural man," &c.

Ver. 7. *green as the grass,*] When they are fresh and strong.

Ver. 8. *thine enemies,*] That is, all the ungodly.

Ver. 9. *mine horn*] *Psalm* xviii. 1.—*an unicorn:*] *Psalm* xxii. 21.—*with fresh oil.*] *Psalm* xxiii. 5.

Ver. 10. *his lust*] Its desire. *Psalm* liv. 7. It was necessary that David's enemies should be overthrown, in order to his deliverance and God's glory.—*his desire*] The desire I entertain in regard to the wicked, namely, that their devices may fail.

Ver. 11. *a palm tree—a cedar*] The wicked are compared to gay and withering grass, ver. 7; the righteous to noble and long-lived trees.—*Libanus.*] Lebanon.

Ver. 12. *Such as are planted*] See *Psalm* lii. 9. *Isa.* lxi. 1—3.

Ver. 13. *more fruit in their age:*] Their graces and virtues shall increase with their years. This is the true character of all God's people. *Col.* i. 10.—*well-liking.*] Flourishing.

It is our duty, and it should be our greatest delight, to sing the praises of our good and glorious God who hath done such great things for us; loading us with the blessings of His providence, and enriching us with the treasures of His grace. Of these His continual mercies we should be continually mindful; at morning and evening especially our hearts should be lifted up, and our voices attuned to prayer and thanksgiving. And the Sabbath, the Lord's own day, should be altogether a day of worship and praise: thou shalt "call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words." *Isa.* lviii. 13. And these praises of the righteous shall never end: when they leave the earth they shall be taken to heaven, and there sing a new song of rejoicing. For while the wicked are cut off like the fading grass, and perish for ever, the righteous shall flourish like a great and goodly tree: they shall grow more and more vigorous and fruitful; every year and every day shall see them ripening for glory; and they shall be transplanted at last into the paradise of God, and bear fruit in life eternal. O my soul, see that thou be thus fruitful: art thou advancing, day by day, in the work of thy salvation, in thy walk with God, in the mastery over thy evil affections and habits, in all holiness and righteousness? Advancing thou art; or otherwise the true life is not in thee. "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen." 2 *Pet.* iii. 18.

QUESTIONS.

What is a good thing?—For the operations of thy hands?—Mine horn, &c.?—With fresh oil?—See his lust?—To what are the wicked compared?—To what the righteous?—What shall they do in their age?—Well-liking?—What is the subject, and what the purpose, of this Psalm?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM XCIII.

The majesty, power, and holiness of Jehovah's kingdom. The Jews acknowledge that this and the seven following Psalms speak of the Messiah.

1 The Lord is King, and hath put on glorious apparel: the Lord hath put on his apparel, and girded himself with strength.

2 He hath made the round world so sure: that it cannot be moved.

3 Ever since the world began hath thy seat been prepared: thou art from everlasting.

4 The floods are risen, O Lord, the floods have lift up their voice: the floods lift up their waves.

5 The waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly: but yet the Lord, who dwelleth on high, is mightier.

6 Thy testimonies, O Lord, are very sure: holiness becometh thine house for ever.

Ver. 1. *is King,*] God is King of all the earth; in a more especial manner He was the King of Israel. And the Jews always regarded their Messiah as a king. *Luke* xix. 38. *John* xii. 15; xix. 12—15. And Jesus speaks of Himself as such. *Luke* xxii. 30. *John* xviii. 36.—*apparel,*] Clothing. The Lord is clothed in majesty.

Ver. 2. *the round world*] *Psalm* lxxxix. 12.

Ver. 3. *thy seat*] Thy throne. *Psalm* xlv. 7.

Ver. 4, 5. *The floods—their waves.*] The enemies of God's kingdom are often compared to floods, swelling and raging with great power. *Isa.* viii. 7, 8; xvii. 12, 13. *Jer.* xlvi. 7, 8. Here, therefore, is foretold the power and dominion of Christ, who shall "reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." 1 *Cor.* xv. 25.

Ver. 6. *Thy testimonies,*] Thy promises, which bear witness to Thee, are sure and faithful.—*holiness becometh thine house*] Perhaps it may mean, "holiness is the ornament of Thy house or sanctuary," from which Thy word of promise has come forth. Where Thou dwellest, truth must ever dwell.

The servant of God in the midst of all the evils which he sees and feels in the world, and of all the enemies by which he is surrounded, has this **powerful consolation**, that "the Lord is King;" that "his kingdom ruleth over all;" that though the wicked should rage and swell, as the waters of the mighty sea, Jehovah has assigned to them their bounds, which they can in no wise pass. As the Lord Jesus, our King Messiah, rebuked the troubled waves upon the stormy lake, and "there was a great calm," (*Matt.* viii. 26,) so has He power over every spirit of man, and humbles the lofty daring of every rebellious sinner. Of this great King, this 'Lord of all power and might,' may we be the true and obedient subjects! But let us properly understand the nature of His kingdom; hear His own words: "My kingdom is not of this world." "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you." *John* xviii. 36. *Luke* xvii. 21. It must be set up in our hearts, bearing rule over our affections and desires, and bringing them all into a blessed subjection to His holy will and law. We must be delivered from the dominion of Satan and this evil world, from "all the sinful lusts of the flesh," and "cleave stedfastly unto God." Thus, while we live in the world, we shall be raised above it; and we shall enter with our Lord into His everlasting kingdom of joy and glory.

QUESTIONS.

Who is King?—What has He put on?—Apparel?—What apparel?—Thy seat?—Who are signified by the floods?—Explain ver. 6.—Of whom does this Psalm speak?

PSALM XCIV.

The Psalmist calls upon the Lord to judge the ungodly, and foretels their doom:—the righteous are happy even in affliction.

1 O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth: thou God, to whom vengeance belongeth, show thyself.

2 Arise, thou Judge of the world: and reward the proud after their deserving.

3 Lord, how long shall the ungodly: how long shall the ungodly triumph?

4 How long shall all wicked doers speak so disdainfully: and make such proud boasting?

5 They smite down thy people, O Lord: and trouble thine heritage.

6 They murder the widow, and the stranger : and put the fatherless to death.

7 And yet they say, Tush, the Lord shall not see : neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.

8 Take heed, ye unwise among the people : O ye fools, when will ye understand ?

9 He that planted the ear, shall he not hear : or he that made the eye, shall he not see ?

10 Or he that nurtureth the heathen : it is he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he punish ?

11 The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man : that they are but vain.

12 Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord : and teachest him in thy law ;

13 That thou mayest give him patience in time of adversity : until the pit be digged up for the ungodly.

14 For the Lord will not fail his people : neither will he forsake his inheritance ;

15 Until righteousness turn again unto judgement : all such as are true in heart shall follow it.

16 Who will rise up with me against the wicked : or who will take my part against the evil-doers ?

17 If the Lord had not helped me : it had not failed but my soul had been put to silence.

18 But when I said, My foot hath slipped : thy mercy, O Lord, helped me up.

19 In the multitude of the sorrows that I had in my heart : thy comforts have refreshed my soul.

20 Wilt thou have any thing to do with the stool of wickedness : which imagineth mischief as a law ?

21 They gather them together against the soul of the righteous : and condemn the innocent blood.

22 But the Lord is my refuge : and my God is the strength of my confidence.

23 He shall recompense them their wickedness, and destroy them in their own malice : yea, the Lord our God shall destroy them.

Ver. 1. *to whom vengeance belongeth :*] Man corrects offenders, but it is only to prevent future offences, not as a recompense for the past : it is for God alone to repay. *Deut.* xxxii. 35. *Rom.* xii. 19.

Ver. 4. *speak so disdainfully :*] With such contempt of Thee and Thy people.

Ver. 8. *unwise—fools,*] *Psalm* xcii. 6.

Ver. 9. *shall he not hear : &c.*] Men are encouraged in wickedness by imagining that God does not behold or regard what they do to His people. The folly of such a thought is shown in this verse ; He who bestowed on man

the power of seeing and hearing, must Himself possess these powers in greater perfection—must have perfectly in Himself all the knowledge that such senses can teach unto man.

Ver. 10. *that nurtureth*] That nourisheth, that feedeth them with instruction. In the *Bible Version* it is thus: "He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct?" "he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?" —The same lesson is to be learnt in whichever sense we read it.

Ver. 11. *the thoughts*] The Lord not only hears and sees, not only is acquainted with what men say and do, but also "knoweth the thoughts."

Ver. 12. *and teachest, &c.*] Blessed is the man who is taught by Thy chastening; blessed is that affliction by which he is taught Thy will. *Heb.* xii. 5—11.

Ver. 13. *until the pit, &c.*] Till the grave be ready for the ungodly, till they perish.

Ver. 15. *Until righteousness, &c.*] The Lord will not forsake His people, but abide with them till He makes their cause triumph. It may have seemed as if righteousness and justice had forsaken the judgment-seat, and wickedness was left to prosper; but this was only for a season of trial; righteousness will take her place again in judgment, and then all the true-hearted will follow her with holy confidence and comfort.

Ver. 17. *my soul had been put to silence.*] I had been laid in the silent grave. *Psalm* xxxi. 19; cxv. 17.

Ver. 18. *My foot hath slipped:*] I am in danger of falling into the hands of my enemies.

Ver. 20. *the stool of wickedness: &c.*] The throne, or judgment-seat, of the wicked, who devise mischief, and practise it under the forms of law.

Ver. 21. *against the soul*] Against the life. How exactly does this verse describe the cause of Jesus! Both Judas and Pilate bare witness to the innocency of the blood that was shed. *Matt.* xxvii. 4—24.

Ver. 23. *destroy them in their own malice:*] Making their wicked plots and dealings against the righteous to become the means of their own destruction. See on *Psalm* vii. 16, 17.

We must never breathe a spirit of vengeance; never take pleasure in the punishment of an offender, however grievously we may have suffered from him. If he has been guilty of any sin, he has done more injury to himself than to us; and we should pray heartily that he may repent and be forgiven. God, who knoweth the heart, can alone judge of the true state and character of every man living: against God is the great offence in every transgression; to God alone, therefore, can vengeance belong; and He will most certainly "reward every man according to his work;" justice may seem to slumber for a time, but it is only delayed, that the sinner may be either moved to repentance, or be left to "fill up the measure of his iniquities." But the wicked take encouragement from this forbearance of Heaven: and as they go on, day after day, without any hindrance in their course of evil, they imagine that God sees not, hears not, observes not, what they do or say; and therefore, that they shall never be called to account. What folly is this! God is every where, and cannot be ignorant of any thing; neither "is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." *Heb.* iv. 13. Let the sinner tremble, and the righteous trust in the goodness and justice of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who deals out judgment in the present world as it best suits the interest of His kingdom and people; and who will, on the latter day, rectify every seeming injustice, and make every "crooked thing straight." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." *Matt.* xxv. 46.

QUESTIONS.

To whom does vengeance belong?—Why?—Reward the proud?—Disdainfully?—When they said, "The Lord shall not see," what argument does the Psalmist use to show their folly?—Nurtureth?—Explain ver. 14, 15.—Put to silence?—My foot hath slipt?—The stool of wickedness, &c.?—Show to whom ver. 21 may be applied.—Destroy them in their own malice?

THE NINETEENTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM XCV.

An invitation to bless and worship God, and to live in holy obedience before Him. This Psalm is therefore very properly used in the opening of our Church service.

1 O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.

2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving: and show ourselves glad in him with psalms.

3 For the Lord is a great God: and a great King above all gods.

4 In his hand are all the corners of the earth: and the strength of the hills is his also.

5 The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands prepared the dry land.

6 O come, let us worship and fall down: and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

7 For he is the Lord our God: and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

8 To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts: as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness;

9 When your fathers tempted me: proved me, and saw my works.

10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said: It is a people that do err in their hearts, for they have not known my ways;

11 Unto whom I sware in my wrath: that they should not enter into my rest.

Ver. 2. *before his presence*] As dwelling within the ark in the tabernacle; and now dwelling in the Christian Church. God's "presence" is every where; but it shines especially in His House, to bless those that "worship him in spirit and in truth." *John* vi. 21—24. See also *Matt.* xviii. 20.

Ver. 4, 5. *the corners, &c.*] The secret places and the lofty hills, the water and the land—all are the Lord's, and under His government.

Ver. 6. *fall down:*] Let us pray to the Almighty, as well as praise Him: and let us honour Him with our bodies, as well as our souls, for both are His. To kneel in prayer has been the custom of all ages: even to their fellow-creatures men are apt to kneel, when they ask any great favour with more than common earnestness. And no true worshipper of God (unless he has some bodily infirmity) will be content with any other posture. Many persons attempt to defend their sitting at public worship. It is folly to reason about it at all: they would not sit, if their heart were humble and full. Do they sit in their private prayers to God? When the broken-hearted penitent sues for mercy, does he take his chair, or fall down

on his knees? It is a shame, at least, to be sitting at Church, while the congregation is kneeling.

Ver. 7. *pasture—sheep*] *Psalm* xxiii. 1; lxxvii. 20.

Ver. 8—11. *To-day, &c.*] Jehovah speaks here: "If ye will ever hear His (your Shepherd's) voice, let your hearts be softened to-day, and be no longer disobedient." We see then the character of the true flock; they "hear the voice" of the Shepherd; so says the same "good Shepherd" in the Gospel. *John* x. 3, 4. 16.—*provocation—temptation*] As when ye provoked Me in your journey through the wilderness, and tried Me in your unbelief, not satisfied with My goodness and power, and demanding further proofs. *Exod.* xvii. 7.

Ver. 10. *grieved*] Provoked—offended—for the space of "forty years." *Numb.* xiv. 33, 34.—*that do err in their hearts,*] Observe, the heart was the cause of all their 'sins, negligences, and ignorances;' they did not obey, because they did not believe; and they did not believe, because they were set against the truth; preferring sin to holiness—evil to good. *John* iii. 19. *Rom.* i. 21.—*not known*] Not understood or considered. See *Psalm* i. 7.

Ver. 11. *Unto whom I sware, &c.*] See *Numb.* xiv. 22, 23, and *Josh.* v. 6. This latter part of the Psalm is very fully applied by the Apostle to believers under the Gospel, *Heb.* iii. iv.; and he informs us, that David was the author of this Psalm. *Heb.* iv. 7.

Let all the best powers of our soul be called forth in the worship and praise of our God—the great Creator, the wise and merciful Governor of the world. Our Maker is our Shepherd—even Jehovah, the eternal Son of God—"without whom was not any thing made that was made." *John* i. 3. He sought us out when lost; He brought us to His fold; He now feeds us, with tenderness and care, as the sheep of His hand; He "laid down his life for the sheep." *John* x. 11. 15. Surely, if we "think on these things," we shall fall down and pour out our hearts before Him: we shall esteem it our highest honour, as well as our bounden duty, so to do; we shall delight in His house and His service more than in all the world besides. How grievous it is to see so many, 'calling themselves Christians,' who never "come before his presence" at all, never enter His house: to see so many, who do enter, without any true devo-

tion! Unthinking, ungrateful sinners! Whom are ye slighting and despising?—Your Creator, your Redeemer, your Judge. Turn, if ye value your souls; turn, while ye may: "Exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." *Heb.* iii. 13. Israel stands as a perpetual warning: when the people came out of Egypt they had a day of trial, and a promised rest to succeed it: they to whom the promise was made, were found wanting, and came short of their rest,—never set a foot on Canaan. The Gospel, in like manner, offers to us all another day of trial in this world, and another promised rest to succeed it,—a rest which "remaineth for the people of God" in heaven. Take we heed, therefore, lest we forfeit the second rest,—as murmuring and rebellious Israel came short of the first. No other trial will be granted: if we fail now, we are lost for ever: but God forbid! may He send us His grace, that we may bow down our hearts before Him, and find Him "the strength of our salvation;" and thus be safely led, by the hand of our heavenly Shepherd, to the eternal pastures of plenty and peace.

QUESTIONS.

Before His presence?—The corners of the earth, &c.?—Fall down, and kneel—what does this teach us?—People of His pasture?—Harden not your hearts—when?—Hear His voice?—Provocation—and temptation—where?—How long?—Grieved?—How did the people err?—What was the consequence of their sin?—What does this teach us?—Where in the New Testament is this Psalm applied?—Who wrote it?—Prove this.

PSALM XCVI.

All the world is invited to sing the praises, and set forth the salvation of God; and it is the call of prophecy, proclaiming the extent and glory of the kingdom of Christ. This is a portion of the Psalm delivered out by David, 1 Chron. xvi.

1 O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the whole earth.

2 Sing unto the Lord, and praise his name: be telling of his salvation from day to day.

3 Declare his honour unto the heathen: and his wonders unto all people.

4 For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised: he is more to be feared than all gods.

5 As for all the gods of the

heathen, they are but idols : but it is the Lord that made the heavens.

6 Glory and worship are before him : power and honour are in his sanctuary.

7 Ascribe unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people : ascribe unto the Lord worship and power.

8 Ascribe unto the Lord the honour due unto his name : bring presents, and come into his courts.

9 O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness : let the whole earth stand in awe of him.

10 Tell it out among the heathen that the Lord is King : and that it is he who hath made the round world so fast that it cannot be moved; and how that he shall judge the people righteously.

11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad : let the sea make a noise, and all that therein is.

12 Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it : then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord.

13 For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth : and with righteousness to judge the world, and the people with his truth.

Ver. 1. *a new song :*] A song to celebrate new mercies; alluding to the new worship which was appointed on the removal of the ark, and which again foreshowed the new worship under the Gospel.

Ver. 7. *O ye kindreds*] All ye nations, of different kind and kin.

Ver. 8. *bring presents,*] *Psalm* xlv. 13.

Ver. 9. *in the beauty of holiness :*] In the beauty of His holy tabernacle and services.

Ver. 10. *that the Lord is King :*] The Lord Messiah, Jesus Christ. We may consider this verse as a prophetic call to the apostles and preachers of the Gospel, to publish the good tidings of their new and eternal kingdom. *Matt.* xxviii. 18—20.—*the round world*] *Psalm* lxxxix. 12.

Ver. 11, 12.] The whole creation is invited to break forth into joy. *Psalm* lxv. 13. *Isa.* xliv. 23; xlv. 8.

Ver. 13. *to judge the earth :*] It alludes to the perfect justice and truth with which Christ should stablish His kingdom upon earth, *Isa.* xi. 4, 5; and to His judgment on the latter day.

A new song was sung, when the ark went up to the tabernacle on Mount Sion; a new song by "the multitude of the

heavenly host," when the Saviour, "which is Christ the Lord," was born at Bethlehem. *Luke* ii. 11—15. A new song, when He rose in triumph from the dead, and when He ascended into the heavens: then was it "told out among the heathen that the Lord is King;" then was the gate of His kingdom opened to all mankind, and people of all kindreds and nations and tongues flocked into it, and became subjects of the King of righteousness and the Prince of peace. "The heavens rejoiced and the earth was glad." The time of His second coming draweth near, to "judge the world in righteousness;" it is "not far from every one of us;" "He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." *Heb.* x. 37. O that we may be prepared to meet Him! looking with humble faith, fervent in daily prayer, diligent in the proper work of our calling, "waiting and watching for the coming of our Lord." Thus we shall be admitted into His heavenly kingdom, and sing a new song of joy with saints and angels around His throne; "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." *Rev.* v. 13.

QUESTIONS.

A new song?—Ye kindreds of the people?—In the beauty of holiness?—The Lord is King?—Who is this?—When was it told out among the heathen?—On what occasions were new songs sung?—What will the Lord do at His second coming?—What then should we do?

PSALM XCVII.

This Psalm is thought to have been written by David when he obtained peaceable possession of the kingdom, and after his enemies had been destroyed by the strong arm of the Lord. It foreshows the spiritual reign of Christ, and the overthrow of His enemies.

1 The Lord is King, the earth may be glad thereof: yea, the multitude of the isles may be glad thereof.

2 Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgement are the habitation of his seat.

3 There shall go a fire before him: and burn up his enemies on every side.

4 His lightnings gave shine unto the world: the earth saw it, and was afraid.

5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord: at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

6 The heavens have declared his righteousness : and all the people have seen his glory.

7 Confounded be all they that worship carved images, and that delight in vain gods : worship him, all ye gods.

8 Sion heard of it, and rejoiced : and the daughters of Judah were glad because of thy judgements, O Lord.

9 For thou, Lord, art higher than all that are in the earth : thou art exalted far above all gods.

10 O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil : the Lord preserveth the souls of his saints ; he shall deliver them from the hand of the ungodly.

11 There is sprung up a light for the righteous : and joyful gladness for such as are true-hearted.

12 Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous : and give thanks for a remembrance of his holiness.

Ver. 1. *The Lord is King,*] *Psalm* xcvi. 13.—*the isles*] An isle, or island, properly speaking, is a land surrounded by water; but the word is often used in Scripture to signify any country beyond the sea. *Isa.* lx. 9. The whole world may be glad.

Ver. 2. *Clouds and darkness*] When the mercy and grace of our heavenly King are to be described, He is likened to the sun shining in a clear sky ; but when He comes to pour wrath upon His enemies, He is represented by terrible storms. The images in ver. 2—5 appear to be borrowed from the terrors on Mount Sinai. *Psalm* xviii. 7—15. And they show forth the destruction of those who opposed the Gospel.—*righteousness and judgement, &c.*] See *Psalm* lxxxix. 15.

Ver. 7. *all ye gods.*] The very idols shall acknowledge, as it were, the power of Jehovah, and the worship due to Him, by their being bowed down to the dust. *Isa.* ii. 1—21. Thus the idol Dagon had been humbled. 1 *Sam.* v. 2, 3. But these words "worship him, all ye gods," further imply, that Christ shall have honour from every creature, by whatever name it may be called, in heaven or in earth. *Eph.* i. 20. 22. *Psalm* lxxxii. 1. 6 ; lxxxix. 7. And St. Paul quotes the words in this sense, "Let all the angels of God worship him." *Heb.* i. 6.

Ver. 8. *heard of it,*] Heard of the downfall of idolatry. —*the daughters of Judah*] The cities and their inhabitants round about Jerusalem. *Psalm* ix. 14. This verse foretels

the joy of the Christian Churches in the days of the Gospel.

Ver. 10. *see that ye hate, &c.*] Show your love to the Lord, by hating and forsaking all sin. They who love God must love what He loves, and hate what He hates.—*his saints ;*] *Psalm* lxxxvi. 2.

Ver. 11. *a light*] Blessings of all kinds are described by this figure. Christ is represented as a "light to lighten the Gentiles." *Luke* ii. 32.

The Lord our King gives blessings without number to all who love and serve Him; but He is terrible in judgment to those "who will not that he should reign over them." *Luke* xix. 27. Let us bow down before Him, whom "all the angels of God worship;" let us "honour the Son even as we honour the Father." *John* v. 23. But if we really love the Lord, and desire that His Name should be hallowed, His kingdom come, and His will be done on earth as in heaven, we shall hate and dread the evil of sin, and carefully watch against it. This is the proof of our love, this is the way to promote the interest of His kingdom, in the midst of a rebellious world. That world we need not fear; His word is pledged, His power is engaged, on behalf of His people: the light of joy and consolation is sown for them in a good soil, and will surely spring up and ripen to a glorious harvest. Let us then rejoice in the Lord, though "in the world we have tribulation:" and we shall find, that when He cometh with "clouds and darkness," with "fire and lightning," to judge a guilty people, and when their hearts are melting with fear at His presence, then we shall admire His majesty and glory, and be comforted and blessed with the beams of His love: we shall share His victory, and rejoice when the world is in flames.

QUESTIONS.

The isles?—Clouds and darkness, &c.?—Whence are these images borrowed?—What do they represent?—Worship Him, all ye gods?—Sion heard of it—of what?—The daughters of Judah?—What must they do, who love the Lord?—Whom does He preserve?—What springs up for the righteous?—What is here meant by light?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM XCVIII.

This Psalm was composed on the occasion of some great victory and blessing, and is similar to the xcvith.

1 O sing unto the Lord a new song : for he hath done marvellous things.

2 With his own right hand, and with his holy arm : hath he gotten himself the victory.

3 The Lord declared his salvation : his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen.

4 He hath remembered his mercy and truth toward the house of Israel : and all the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our God.

5 Show yourselves joyful unto the Lord, all ye lands : sing, rejoice, and give thanks.

6 Praise the Lord upon the harp : sing to the harp with a psalm of thanksgiving.

7 With trumpets also, and shawms : O show yourselves joyful before the Lord the King.

8 Let the sea make a noise, and all that therein is : the round world, and they that dwell therein.

9 Let the floods clap their hands, and let the hills be joyful together before the Lord : for he is come to judge the earth.

10 With righteousness shall he judge the world : and the people with equity.

Ver. 1. *marvellous things.*] Wonderful things.

Ver. 2. *hand—arm :*] *Psalm* lxxxix. 22.

Ver. 4. *all the ends of the world*] The same as "the multitude of the isles." *Psalm* xcvii. 1. It is a prophecy, that salvation through Christ shall be preached to all nations.

Ver. 7. *shawms :*] Were a sort of wind instrument, of the trumpet kind.

Ver. 8, 9.] *Psalm* xcvi. 11, 12.

Ver. 10.] *Psalm* xcvi. 13.

The Gospel had to contend with every enemy that Satan could find in the world : the chief priests and scribes, and all the host of Jewish people; the heathen with their king, and magistrates, and mighty army; all combined to crush the meek and lowly Jesus, with His few humble, helpless followers: but over all

these forces united, Jesus gained the victory; His kingdom was established, and His Gospel spread through the earth: "The battle was the Lord's," it was "his own right hand and his holy arm" which made a way for His apostles and disciples to preach the word, and a high-way for the people to "come unto him and be saved." What a marvellous display of the power and goodness of Jehovah! truly does it demand our most devout and fervent thanksgiving; well may we join the whole creation in setting forth the praises of our victorious Redeemer; well may we do our part, as God affords us grace and opportunity, to assist in spreading over the earth the knowledge of this great salvation. But while we are looking and labouring for others, let us never forget ourselves; our own state and condition, our own happiness and safety. Has the Lord gained for Himself a victory in our hearts? is His throne of grace and righteousness established there? are the mighty foes, sin and Satan, humbled and subdued? though not yet driven out, are they kept under? are we more and more set free from each besetting sin, and daily "adding to our faith virtue?" 2 *Pet.* i. 5. If so, we have great reason to "show ourselves joyful;" the Saviour's conquest is our own; and for every sin subdued, for every stronghold of Satan destroyed, for every field of righteousness won, we may "sing a new song" to the Lord of grace and glory.

QUESTIONS.

Marvellous things?—All the ends of the world—to what does it allude?—Shawms?—What is the subject of this Psalm?

PSALM XCIX.

The majesty and mercy of Jehovah are celebrated in this Psalm, and the people are exhorted to worship Him.

1 The Lord is King, be the people never so impatient: he sitteth between the cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet.

2 The Lord is great in Sion: and high above all people.

3 They shall give thanks unto thy name: which is great, wonderful, and holy.

4 The King's power loveth judgement; thou hast prepared equity: thou hast executed judgement and righteousness in Jacob.

5 O magnify the Lord our God: and fall down before his footstool, for he is holy.

6 Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among such as call upon his name: these called upon the Lord, and he heard them.

7 He spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar: for they kept

his testimonies, and the law that he gave them.

8 Thou heardest them, O Lord our God : thou forgavest them, O God, and punishedst their own inventions.

9 O magnify the Lord our God, and worship him upon his holy hill : for the Lord our God is holy.

Ver. 1. *The Lord is King,*] These words have the same meaning as in *Psalm* xcvi. 10 ; xcvii. 1, and relate to the Messiah : however the people rebel against Him, His kingdom shall be established. *Psalm* ii. 1—6.—*between the cherubims,*] On the mercy-seat in the ark. *Numb.* vii. 89. And thus it is foretold, He shall reign in the Christian Church, in the person of Jesus Christ.

Ver. 4. *loveth judgement ;*] Though the King's power be so very great, it is never exercised but in righteousness and just judgment, which are His delight. *Psalm* lxxxix. 15.

Ver. 5. *before his footstool,*] Kings, when sitting on their thrones, rested their feet upon a small stool ; and therefore to "fall down before the footstool" was an act of homage and service.

Ver. 6.] The examples of Moses, and Aaron, and Samuel, and their success in prayer, are proposed as encouragements to the people to "go and do likewise." See *Exod.* xxxii. 32. *Numb.* xvi. 47. 1 *Sam.* vii. 9.

Ver. 7. *out of the cloudy pillar :*] Which went about with the Israelites in the wilderness, and rested on the tabernacle. *Exod.* xix. 9 ; xxxiii. 9. *Numb.* xii. 5.

Ver. 8. *and punishedst*] The Bible Version leads us to the true sense : "Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions ;" that is, of their sins, the sinful ways which they had found out for themselves, in opposition to Thy law. *Eccles.* vii. 29. Pardon was obtained, though the punishment had begun ; as we read "the plague was stayed." *Numb.* xvi. 48. This agrees with the description given by Jehovah of Himself, as a God of mercy and of justice. *Exod.* xxxiv. 6, 7.

The rebellion of man can never defeat or hinder the counsels of the Most High God. Whatever the Lord has declared shall

certainly be performed in His own appointed time and way. His enemies have reason to tremble at His power, for He "will not spare the guilty." In the same power let His servants rejoice, for He is "mighty to save." And if the people of old were blessed through the prayers and intercessions of Moses, and Aaron, and Samuel, how much more have we to expect, and how much more comfort and confidence may we derive, from the merciful office of our great High Priest, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is ascended into the heavens, and sitteth on His throne of mercy, daily pleading for the forgiveness of our sins, and the healing of our infirmities, "seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us!" *Heb.* vii. 25. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." *Rom.* viii. 26. And let us pray also for one another; for the "effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." *James* v. 16. Let us pray that we may all be brought into a sincere obedience to our Heavenly King; not seeking out ways of our own, not following our own vain intentions, but framing the whole course of our lives according to God's revealed will and word. This it is "to magnify the Lord our God;" and thus we shall be brought, through our heavenly Mediator, to "worship him upon his holy hill" of the everlasting Sion.

QUESTIONS.

Be the people never so impatient?—Between the cherubims?—The King's power loveth judgment?—Before His footstool?—Why?—Who called upon His name of old?—When were their prayers answered?—Out of what did God speak unto them?—Explain ver. 8.

PSALM C.

The Psalmist invites all the world to unite with the Israelites in praising their gracious God; alluding to the good tidings of the Gospel, to the time when "their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Rom. x. 18. *We Christians call upon the world thus enlightened, using this Psalm in the daily service of our Church.*

1 O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands: serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.

2 Be ye sure that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

3 O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and speak good of his name.

4 For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting: and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

Ver. 1. *O be joyful*] The expression alludes to the joyous sounding of all the trumpets at the time of Jubilee, proclaiming the year of liberty. *Levit.* xxv. 9, 10. And it calls upon all the inhabitants of the earth to join in one grand chorus of rejoicing, in honour of their merciful God. We are especially called to rejoice in Him, on account of "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." *Gal.* v. 1.

Ver. 2. *Be ye sure, &c.*] Let this be a truth deeply settled in our minds and hearts, let nothing ever tempt you to doubt it—that the Lord is God of the whole earth. And this applies also to the Lord Messiah, who is "the mighty God." *Isa.* ix. 6.—*that hath made us,*] God created all men, but He "formed Israel for himself, to show forth his praise." *Isa.* xliii. 1. 21. *Deut.* xxxii. 6. And Christians are a new creation, *Eph.* ii. 10; iv. 24. *Col.* iii. 10, "a peculiar people, that we should show forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light." 1 *Pet.* ii. 9.—*the sheep*] *Psalm* xcv. 7.

Ver. 3. *into his gates, &c.*] Into the gates and courts of His tabernacle. *Psalm* cxviii. 19, 20.

Ver. 4. *his truth*] His faithfulness in the performance of all His promises.

Surely if men did but know and consider their situation in respect of God, and their vast obligations to Him, it is impossible but they must love and serve Him. "In him we live, and move, and have our being." *Acts* xvii. 28. He hath "made us and all the world:" He hath "redeemed us and all mankind;" He "sanctifieth us and all the elect people of God:" by His grace "we are what we are;" by the free and undeserved goodness of the great Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,

one God world without end. The thought of such majesty and mercy is enough to fill the soul of poor, weak, fallen man: but man will not think; few think as they ought to do, and many not at all. Do we perceive that God has been gracious to us? Let us pray, then, for yet another blessing; for grace to love Him with all our heart and mind and soul and strength: and then we shall delight, on all occasions, to praise His holy name. His service is joyful; not what the world imagines it to be—unpleasant and gloomy, but full of joy: of this we are assured and reminded in almost every Psalm. There is no joy upon earth to be compared with the joy of serving the Lord: so His servants have always said, and they are the only judges. "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous:" praise Him in the secret chamber: praise Him in the company of friends: praise Him in the courts of His house, swelling the chorus of His worshippers: and thus ye shall hear the glad sound of the jubilee trumpet at the latter day, proclaiming everlasting liberty to the redeemed of the Lord; and ye shall "go your way" into the gates of heaven, and bear a part in the harmony of the skies.

QUESTIONS.

What is the subject of this Psalm?—O be joyful?—Who are meant?—Serve the Lord?—How?—Of what are we to be sure?—He that hath made us?—His truth endureth?

PSALM CI.

David resolves to govern first himself, and then his court and kingdom, in such a way as to favour the good, and to discourage and punish the evil.

1 My song shall be of mercy and judgement: unto thee, O Lord, will I sing.

2 O let me have understanding: in the way of godliness.

3 When wilt thou come unto me: I will walk in my house with a perfect heart.

4 I will take no wicked thing in hand; I hate the sins of unfaithfulness: there shall no such cleave unto me.

5 A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked person.

6 Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour: him will I destroy.

7 Whoso hath also a proud look and high stomach: I will not suffer him.

8 Mine eyes look upon such as are faithful in the land: that they may dwell with me.

9 Whoso leadeth a godly life: he shall be my servant.

10 There shall no deceitful person dwell in my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.
11 I shall soon destroy all the ungodly that are in the land: that I may root out all wicked doers from the city of the Lord.

Ver. 1. *mercy and judgement:*] Mercy and favour to the righteous, judgment upon the ungodly.

Ver. 3. *When wilt thou come unto me:*] To protect and bless me with full authority and power. David had not yet been thoroughly settled in his house and kingdom.

Ver. 5. *a froward heart*] A person of froward heart, of perverse and bad disposition.—*will not know*] Will not acknowledge, or keep company with. *Psalm* i. 7.

Ver. 6. *him will I destroy.*] I will cut him off from my household and favour.

Ver. 11. *in the land—from the city*] David resolves that his godly care shall extend to his whole kingdom; he says, "I will put down the wicked, and favour the pious and the good, to the utmost of my power."

David, in thus determining to put away the wicked far from him, and to choose the good and righteous alone, fitly represented his Lord Messiah, who will not honour any of His disciples and friends, but such as are "cleansed from all unrighteousness of flesh and spirit;" such as He has "purified unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works." *Tit.* ii. 14. "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints: neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." *Eph.* v. 3—5. And as the blessed Jesus rejects all such persons from His kingdom upon earth, most certainly they will be shut out of His kingdom in heaven; out of that holy city, into which "there shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (*Rev.* xxi. 27); such as have "purified themselves, even as he is pure." 1 *John* iii. 3. This example of David, and of a greater than David, we must all follow in our several stations of life: having nothing to do

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TWENTIETH DAY.

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Morning Prayer.

PSALM CII.

The Psalmist prays in deep sorrow, and mourns over the afflicted state of the Church; but trusts in God for help. This is one of the Penitential Psalms, and is used on Ash-Wednesday.

1 Hear my prayer, O Lord: and let my crying come unto thee.

2 Hide not thy face from me in the time of my trouble: incline thine ear unto me when I call; O hear me, and that right soon.

3 For my days are consumed away like smoke: and my bones are burnt up as it were a firebrand.

4 My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass: so that I forget to eat my bread.

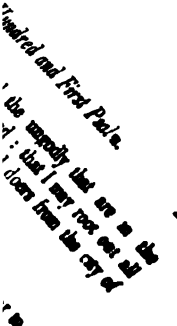
5 For the voice of my groaning: my bones will scarce cleave to my flesh.

6 I am become like a pelican in the wilderness: and like an owl that is in the desert.

7 I have watched, and am even as it were a sparrow: that sitteth alone upon the housetop.

8 Mine enemies revile me all the day long: and they that are mad upon me are sworn together against me.

9 For I have eaten ashes, as it



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14 And why? thy servants think upon her stones : and it pitieth them to see her in the dust.

15 The heathen shall fear thy name, O Lord : and all the kings of the earth thy majesty;

16 When the Lord shall build up Sion : and when his glory shall appear;

17 When he turneth him unto the prayer of the poor destitute : and despiseth not their desire.

18 This shall be written for those that come after : and the people which shall be born shall praise the Lord.

19 For he hath looked down from his sanctuary : out of the heaven did the Lord behold the earth;

20 That he might hear the mournings of such as are in captivity : and deliver the children appointed unto death;

21 That they may declare the name of the Lord in Sion : and his worship at Jerusalem;

22 When the people are gathered together : and the kingdoms also, to serve the Lord.

23 He brought down my strength in my journey : and shortened my days.

24 But I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of mine age : as for thy years, they endure throughout all generations.

25 Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth : and the heavens are the work of thy hands.

26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure : they all shall wax old as doth a garment;

27 And as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed : but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

28 The children of thy servants shall continue : and their seed shall stand fast in thy sight.

Ver. 2. *Hide not thy face*] See *Psalm* xiii. 1.

Ver. 3. *as it were a firebrand.*] Like a torch, or piece of burning wood. Grief often produces a feeling as if the bones were dried up, ver. 5.

Ver. 5. *will scarce cleave*] I am so much wasted.

Ver. 6. *a pelican*] A lonely bird: Grief loves to be alone.

Ver. 7. *I have watched,*] Have been kept awake in the night by my mournful thoughts and musings.

Ver. 9. *I have eaten ashes, &c.*] Dust and ashes are the emblem of affliction; to eat ashes, therefore, as bread, means "to *live*, as it were, upon affliction." *Psalm* xlii. 3. *Isa.* xxx. 20.

Ver. 11. *gone like a shadow:*] Or, "like a *gone* shadow," like a shadow just gone or going as the sun sets; fainting and fading away into nothing.

Ver. 12. *But thou, &c.*] This is the consolation of the mourner, that though the body is frail and perishing, the Lord endureth for ever, and is the refuge of the immortal soul: the remembrance of His mercy and faithfulness can never fail.

Ver. 13. *the time is come.*] Some have thought from these words, that the captivity of God's people (which was to last seventy years, *Jer.* xxix. 10,) had just come to an end, when this Psalm was written.

Ver. 14. *think upon her stones:*] The stones of the fallen city, lying, as they do, a heap of ruin.

Ver. 15. *The heathen—the kings*] This points out the conversion of the Gentiles under the Gospel. See on *Psalm* xlv. 13. 17.

Ver. 16. *his glory*] The glory of His presence in the temple, betokening His glorious appearance in the body, as "God manifest in the flesh."

Ver. 19. *from his sanctuary:*] From His high and holy place above.

Ver. 23. *in my journey:*] In my journey of life. *Psalm* xxxix. 14.

Ver. 24. *as for thy years, &c.*] Though I were cut off, Thou remainest unchangeable for ever, and wilt perform all Thy promises to Thy servants and their children.

Ver. 23—27.] St. Paul has expressly applied the whole of this passage to Christ, *Heb.* i. 10—12; and it shows, 1. That the Psalmist was inspired by the Holy Ghost to speak these words. 2. That Christ has been declared from of old to be the Maker and Founder of the heavens and the earth, and therefore revealed as God. *John* i. 1—3.

The greater our troubles, the more fervently and frequently should we pray to the Lord for His grace and mercy: and blessed indeed are those afflictions which lead us to seek Him, which send us to our secret chamber, that we may converse with our own hearts, and inquire why it is that the Lord has brought us to grief: for what sin? for what neglect? But in the midst of our weepings and wailings, we must not complain, we must not despair. The Lord still liveth, still waiteth to be gracious. Whatever changes may take place in ourselves, or in the world around us, He remains always the same, the terror of His enemies, the hope and refuge of His people. His promise is sure: the very trials which appear to be making His word doubtful, are the means by which it is fulfilled: we find His strength in our weakness, His grace in our time of need, His comfort in our sorrow. And though our bodily frame be wasting and withering like grass, and the shadow of life be vanishing, we still have a firm and unshaken confidence in the God of Israel: our Redeemer "liveth for evermore;" He "was, and is, and is to come," "eternal in the heavens." He takes compassion upon His suffering Church, and upon every suffering member of it: "For we have not an high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." *Heb.* iv. 15. He now sits on His everlasting throne of judgment and of mercy, the Saviour of His people, world without end.

QUESTIONS.

Hide not thy face?—A firebrand?—Like a pelican, &c.?—I have eaten ashes, &c.?—Thy remembrance?—When His glory shall appear?—From His sanctuary?—In my journey?—Explain ver. 23—27.—To whom are the words applied?—Who applies them?—And what is shown by this application of the words?

PSALM CIII.

David gives thanks for recovering from some sickness, describes the mercy of God in most beautiful language, and calls upon all creatures to praise Him.

1 Praise the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, praise his holy name.
2 Praise the Lord, O my soul: and forget not all his benefits;
3 Who forgiveth all thy sin: and healeth all thine infirmities;

4 Who saveth thy life from destruction : and crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness ;

5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things : making thee young and lusty as an eagle.

6 The Lord executeth righteousness and judgement : for all them that are oppressed with wrong.

7 He showed his ways unto Moses : his works unto the children of Israel.

8 The Lord is full of compassion and mercy : long-suffering and of great goodness.

9 He will not alway be chiding : neither keepeth he his anger for ever.

10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins : nor rewarded us according to our wickednesses.

11 For look how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth : so great is his mercy also toward them that fear him.

12 Look how wide also the east is from the west : so far hath he set our sins from us.

13 Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children : even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear him.

14 For he knoweth whereof we are made : he remembereth that we are but dust.

15 The days of man are but as grass : for he flourisheth as a flower of the field.

16 For as soon as the wind goeth over it, it is gone : and the place thereof shall know it no more.

17 But the merciful goodness of the Lord endureth for ever and ever upon them that fear him : and his righteousness upon children's children ;

18 Even upon such as keep his covenant : and think upon his commandments to do them.

19 The Lord hath prepared his seat in heaven : and his kingdom ruleth over all.

20 O praise the Lord, ye angels of his, ye that excel in strength : ye that fulfil his commandment, and hearken unto the voice of his words.

21 O praise the Lord, all ye his hosts : ye servants of his that do his pleasure.

22 O speak good of the Lord, all ye works of his, in all places of his dominion : praise thou the Lord, O my soul.

Ver. 1. *all that is within me*] My mind and heart, all my thoughts, and feelings, and desires.

Ver. 2. *forget not*] Remember all his benefits ; forget not any of them.

Ver. 3. *forgiveth—healeth*] The disease was considered to have been sent as a punishment for sin : and therefore forgiving and healing came together. *Matt.* ix. 1—8.

Ver. 5. *Who satisfieth, &c.*] Who giveth thee appetite, nourishment, and strength.—*as an eagle.*] The eagle continues strong and fresh in old age, and was supposed to

gain new vigour after losing his feathers: so David, after sickness, represented himself as renewed and strengthened: appearing young again. Thus *Isa.* xl. 31.

Ver. 10. *after*] According to; thus, in the Litany, we pray, "O Lord, deal not with us *after* our sins."—*rewarded*] Recompensed.

Ver. 12. *our sins*] The punishment due to our sins. Thus 2 *Cor.* v. 10, "receive the things done in his body," means, "receive the due recompense of the things done in his body."

Ver. 13. *like as a father*] *Isa.* xlix. 15.

Ver. 15. *as a flower*] For a very short time.

Ver. 17.] See on *Psalm* cii. 24—28.

Ver. 18. *to do them.*] Obedience is the only proof that we are brought to God by true faith and love, and therefore is altogether necessary as a means of obtaining His favour.

Ver. 19. *prepared his seat*] The throne of God is set in the heavens, and He is the ruler of all.

David ends this Psalm as he begun, with a charge to his own soul. Thus whatever we say or do, and whatever persons we may call to their duty, let us always bear in mind, that our first and last concern is with ourselves: to see that our own hearts, and our own tongues, and our own hands, be engaged and employed in the service of our Redeemer and our God. And is there not a cause? We have been receiving benefits and blessings from His gracious hand, ever since we drew our first breath; all of us have been clothed and fed, and most of us favoured with many earthly comforts day by day, with kind friends and sweet refreshments. Are we sick? It is God who raises and restores us. Do we meet with accident or danger? It is God who delivers us; He spreads His covering of mercy over us, and we come forth unhurt. Nay, my soul, but think thou likewise of other diseases and dangers, which bring upon thee defilement and death; think of thy sins; think how thou hast made the mighty God thine enemy, and exposed thyself to the fire of His everlasting wrath. And art thou troubled? It is well: bow thyself down to the dust; shed thy tears of repentance: and then rise and look up; see the vast arch of heaven high above thy head,—an emblem of thy Father's mercy, in the Lord Jesus Christ, His beloved and eternal Son: lift up thy

voice and be thankful. Even to the worst and vilest of sinners pardon is offered (*Isa.* i. 18; lvi. 7); and the best man living may truly say, "He hath not dealt with me according to my sins:" "for this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." 1 *Tim.* i. 15. To Thee let us fly, Thou merciful Physician both of body and soul; preserve us from all evil in this world, and give us grace to bless Thy holy name: and when our bodies go to their dust, O take our souls to sing Thy praise for ever, "with angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven."

QUESTIONS.

Upon what does David call to praise the Lord?—And why, what had the Lord done?—As an eagle?—To whom did the Lord show His ways and works?—Of what is He full?—How has He not dealt with us?—And not rewarded us?—Describe how great is God's mercy.—And how far He hath set our sins from us.—Like whom is He merciful?—What are the days of man?—Prepared His seat?—How is this Psalm begun and ended?—And what does this teach us?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM CIV.

A noble Psalm of praise, setting forth the power, and wisdom, and goodness of Jehovah, in His works of creation and providence. And because the same Almighty Spirit is manifested in the wonders of grace, as in the wonders of nature, therefore the Church uses this Psalm on Whit-Sunday.

1 Praise the Lord, O my soul: O Lord my God, thou art become exceeding glorious; thou art clothed with majesty and honour.

2 Thou deckest thyself with light as it were with a garment: and spreadest out the heavens like a curtain.

3 Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: and maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind.

4 He maketh his angels spirits: and his ministers a flaming fire.

5 He laid the foundations of the earth: that it never should move at any time.

6 Thou coveredst it with the deep like as with a garment: the waters stand in the hills.

7 At thy rebuke they flee:

at the voice of thy thunder they are afraid.

8 They go up as high as the hills, and down to the valleys beneath : even unto the place which thou hast appointed for them.

9 Thou hast set them their bounds which they shall not pass : neither turn again to cover the earth.

10 He sendeth the springs into the rivers : which run among the hills.

11 All beasts of the field drink thereof : and the wild asses quench their thirst.

12 Beside them shall the fowls of the air have their habitation : and sing among the branches.

13 He watereth the hills from above : the earth is filled with the fruit of thy works.

14 He bringeth forth grass for the cattle : and green herb for the service of men ;

15 That he may bring food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man : and oil to make him a cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen man's heart.

16 The trees of the Lord also are full of sap : even the cedars of Libanus which he hath planted ;

17 Wherein the birds make their nests : and the fir-trees are a dwelling for the stork.

18 The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats : and so are the stony rocks for the conies.

19 He appointed the moon for certain seasons : and the sun knoweth his going down.

20 Thou makest darkness that it may be night : wherein all the beasts of the forest do move.

21 The lions roaring after their prey : do seek their meat from God.

22 The sun ariseth, and they get them away together : and lay them down in their dens.

23 Man goeth forth to his work, and to his labour : until the evening.

24 O Lord, how manifold are thy works : in wisdom hast thou made them all ; the earth is full of thy riches !

25 So is the great and wide sea also : wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.

26 There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan : whom thou hast made to take his pastime therein.

27 These wait all upon thee : that thou mayest give them meat in due season.

28 When thou givest it them, they gather it : and when thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good.

29 When thou hidest thy face, they are troubled : when thou takest away their breath, they die, and are turned again to their dust.

30 When thou lettest thy breath go forth, they shall be made : and thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

31 The glorious majesty of the Lord shall endure for ever : the Lord shall rejoice in his works.

32 The earth shall tremble at the look of him : if he do

but touch the hills, they shall smoke.

33 I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live : I will praise my God while I have my being.

34 And so shall my words please him : my joy shall be in the Lord.

35 As for sinners, they shall be consumed out of the earth, and the ungodly shall come to an end : praise thou the Lord, O my soul, praise the Lord.

Ver. 2. *deckest*] Clothest and adornest Thyself with light. Light was the first thing created. *Gen.* i. 3.

Ver. 3. *layeth the beams of his chambers*] Fixeth His dwelling-place.

Ver. 4. *his angels spirits: &c.*] From this we learn that angels, which are spiritual, and not bodily beings, are as much God's creatures as men are, *Heb.* i. 7; and they fly, with the wind and the lightning, to execute the commands of their great Creator.

Ver. 5. *laid the foundations, &c.*] From the note on *Psalm* cii. 25, it plainly appears, that His work of creation is to be ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ: and therefore He may be considered as the Creator spoken of through the whole of this Psalm. In truth, the creation was the work of the blessed Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. *Mal.* ii. 10. *John* i. 3. *Gen.* i. 2.—*never should move*] Never should be moved from its place.

Ver. 6. *the deep*] The deep waters, the sea.—*stand in the hills.*] At first the waters covered all, even the tops of the mountains; afterwards, (ver. 7—9,) they were collected together into separate beds, and formed different seas. *Gen.* i. 6—10.

Ver. 9. *their bounds*] See *Job* xxxviii. 8—11.

Ver. 11. *the wild asses*] They live in the dry wilderness, and even they are supplied with water.

Ver. 12. *Beside them*] On the banks of the rivers, ver. 10; the trees grew chiefly there, (*Psalm* i. 3,) and therefore the birds would be there also.

Ver. 13. *from above :*] From the clouds, ver. 3.—*the earth is filled*] All the living creatures are supplied and satisfied with the produce of Thy creation.

Ver. 15. *and oil, &c.*] In the Bible Version it is, "oil to make his face to shine," in allusion to the custom of

rubbing the skin with oil, at feasts, and on joyful occasions. —*to strengthen man's heart.*] To put vigour and life into man.

Ver. 16. *The trees of the Lord*] The great cedars and other trees of the mountain-forest, called "the trees of the Lord," because they receive no help from man, and grow without his care; these are full of juice and vigour.

Ver. 17. *the stork.*] A bird which makes her nest at the top of high buildings or trees.

Ver. 18. *the conies.*] A small and feeble kind of animals, which dwelt in the mountains. *Prov.* xxx. 24. 26.

Ver. 19. *for certain seasons:*] As a mark and measure of time. See *Gen.* i. 14. Many of the Jewish feasts were regulated by the moon.

Ver. 21. *do seek, &c.*] The lions, like other animals, are supplied from God's bounty; and seem as if they asked their food by their roaring when hungry.

Ver. 24. *of thy riches.*] Of the precious fruits of thy creation.

Ver. 25. *innumerable,*] Beyond number.—*great beasts.*] —great animals.

Ver. 26. *Leviathan:*] Any large animal belonging to the sea: sometimes the *crocodile, Psalm* lxxxiv. 15; here it may signify the *whale.—pastime*] Pleasure and enjoyment.

Ver. 29. *when thou hidest, &c.*] When thou appearest not to feed and preserve them; as in times of famine, of cold, &c.—*to their dust.*] Each to his own kind of dust. 1 *Cor.* xv. 39.

Ver. 30. *thy breath*] Thy Spirit. "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." *Job* xxxiii. 4. See also *Gen.* ii. 7. *Psalm* xxxiii. 6. Thus it is also with the spiritual life, the life of grace in the heart of man; the Holy Spirit is the author thereof.—*thou shalt renew*] Fresh creatures are called into being, as others die off; there is a regular succession and supply.

Ver. 31. *shall rejoice*] "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." *Gen.* i. 31.

Ver. 32. *tremble—smoke.*] This appears to denote the

earthquakes and burning mountains, which are found in some countries, and are the effects of the Lord's power.

That man who forgets the wonders and mercies of the Lord, is without any excuse; for we are continually surrounded with objects which may serve to bring the power and goodness of God strikingly to mind. The light, how beautiful, and wonderful, and necessary to our well-being! The sun and moon and all the heavenly bodies, how glorious in their constant order! The mild and fruitful shower, what a token of the loving-kindness of our Creator! while the raging storm proclaims His terrible might! Every day let our mind and heart be open to such truths, and we shall never fail to behold the glory of Jehovah in His works. The unbeliever and those "who know not God," may be expected to pass along without a thought of Him or His ways, and go to their graves, looking downward "like the beasts that perish;" but the Christian, and those who profess to know God, should bear Him faithfully in mind, or their knowledge will sadly condemn them. Let us only think of the thousands and millions of living creatures in the air, upon the earth, and in the waters, all instructed how to make, or where to seek their dwellings; and all provided for in due season, by their Maker's never-failing bounty, and all preserved by that ever-watchful providence, without whose knowledge and permission "not a sparrow falleth to the ground." Every one of these created objects, whether with or without life, may be said, in its own way, to celebrate the Creator's glory; rejoicing in His goodness, though unknown, and answering the purposes of His will. And shall man, the head of all—man, blessed with reason—man, taught by His maker—shall he be found wanting in praise and gratitude and love? Forbid it, "O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh." *Numb.* xvi. 22. And as Thy creative Spirit did make, and doth continue, the race of every living thing, so let Thy Spirit of grace create in us a love of Thee, and keep it for ever alive in the hearts of Thy people; that so, we may not be cut off with the ungodly who forget Thee, but live to sing Thy praise, O adorable Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Persons, one God for ever and ever.

QUESTIONS.

Thou deckest Thyself?—With what?—Layeth the beams of His chambers?—Where?—What is the subject of this Psalm?—Explain ver. 4.—Where is it quoted?—Who laid the foundations of the earth?—Explain ver. 15.—The trees of the Lord?—What of them?—The stork?—Where does she build?—The

conies?—The moon for certain seasons?—What is said of the lions?—Innumerable?—Small and great beasts?—Leviathan?—Hidest Thy face?—Thou shalt renew the face of the earth?—The earth shall tremble?—The hills smoke?—What are we taught by this Psalm?

THE TWENTY-FIRST DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM CV.

A call to the praise of God in remembrance of His mercies to the Church, from the time of Abraham to the settlement of Israel in Canaan. The former part of this Psalm (ver. 1—15) *was certainly composed by David, and is found in* 1 Chron. xvi. 8—22, *and probably he wrote the whole.*

1 O give thanks unto the Lord, and call upon his name: tell the people what things he hath done.

2 O let your songs be of him, and praise him: and let your talking be of all his wondrous works.

3 Rejoice in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.

4 Seek the Lord and his strength: seek his face evermore.

5 Remember the marvellous works that he hath done: his wonders, and the judgements of his mouth.

6 O ye seed of Abraham his servant: ye children of Jacob his chosen.

7 He is the Lord our God: his judgements are in all the world.

8 He hath been alway mindful of his covenant and promise: that he made to a thousand generations;

9 Even the covenant that he made with Abraham: and the oath that he sware unto Isaac;

10 And appointed the same unto Jacob for a law: and to Israel for an everlasting testament;

11 Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan: the lot of your inheritance;

12 When there were yet but a few of them: and they strangers in the land;

13 What time as they went from one nation to another: from one kingdom to another people;

14 He suffered no man to do them wrong: but reproved even kings for their sakes.

15 Touch not mine anointed : and do my prophets no harm.

16 Moreover, he called for a dearth upon the land : and destroyed all the provision of bread.

17 But he had sent a man before them : even Joseph, who was sold to be a bond-servant ;

18 Whose feet they hurt in the stocks : the iron entered into his soul ;

19 Until the time came that his cause was known : the word of the Lord tried him.

20 The king sent, and delivered him : the prince of the people let him go free.

21 He made him lord also of his house : and ruler of all his substance ;

22 That he might inform his princes after his will : and teach his senators wisdom.

23 Israel also came into Egypt : and Jacob was a stranger in the land of Ham.

24 And he increased his people exceedingly : and made them stronger than their enemies ;

25 Whose heart turned so, that they hated his people : and dealt untruly with his servants.

26 Then sent he Moses his servant : and Aaron whom he had chosen.

27 And these showed his tokens among them : and wonders in the land of Ham.

28 He sent darkness, and it was dark : and they were not obedient unto his word.

29 He turned their waters into blood : and slew their fish.

30 Their land brought forth frogs : yea, even in their kings' chambers.

31 He spake the word, and there came all manner of flies : and lice in all their quarters.

32 He gave them hail-stones for rain : and flames of fire in their land.

33 He smote their vines also and fig-trees : and destroyed the trees that were in their coasts.

34 He spake the word, and the grasshoppers came, and caterpillars innumerable : and did eat up all the grass in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.

35 He smote all the first-born in their land : even the chief of all their strength.

36 He brought them forth also with silver and gold : there was not one feeble person among their tribes.

37 Egypt was glad at their departing : for they were afraid of them.

38 He spread out a cloud to be a covering : and fire to give light in the night-season.

39 At their desire he brought quails : and he filled them with the bread of heaven.

40 He opened the rock of stone, and the waters flowed out : so that rivers ran in the dry places.

41 For why? he remembered his holy promise : and Abraham his servant.

42 And he brought forth his people with joy : and his chosen with gladness ;

43 And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they took the labours of the people in possession;

44 That they might keep his statutes: and observe his laws.

Ver. 4. *seek the Lord, &c.*] Be constant and earnest in attending upon the public worship of Jehovah, before the ark, in which He manifests His presence, and from which He shows His power.

Ver. 5. *marvellous*] Wonderful.—*the judgements of his mouth.*] The punishment of your enemies according to His word.

Ver. 6. *Jacob his chosen.*] *Gen.* xxv. 23. *Rom.* ix. 10—13.

Ver. 8, 9. *his covenant, &c.*] See *Gen.* xii. xv. xvii. xxii. xxvi.

Ver. 10. *for an everlasting testament;*] For a covenant which should never be broken.

Ver. 11. *Unto thee*] Unto thee, O Jacob, and thy children after thee. *Gen.* xxviii. 10—15.

Ver. 12. *strangers in the land;*] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob dwelt as strangers in Canaan, the land of promise. *Gen.* xvii. 8; xxiii. 4. *Acts* vii. 5.

Ver. 14. *reproved even kings*] *Gen.* xii. 17; xx. 7.

Ver. 15. *mine anointed:*] My chosen people; persons set apart or consecrated to God's service are called *anointed. Isaiah* xlv. 1; lxi. 1. *Zech.* iv. 14. *Psalm* ii. 2.—*my prophets*] A prophet commonly means one who tells beforehand what shall come to pass; but the word is also applied to any holy man, who declared or taught the will and word of God. *Exod.* vii. 1, 2. *John* iv. 19. *Acts* xv. 32. *Psalm* lxxiv. 10.

Ver. 16. *he called for a dearth*] For a famine, which is here spoken of as if it were a servant, ready to come at God's bidding. *Gen.* xli.—*destroyed, &c.*] In the *Bible Version* it is, "He brake the whole staff of bread;" bread, being the principal support, is called the staff and stay of life. *Isaiah* iii. 1.

Ver. 17. *even Joseph,*] *Gen.* xxxix. 1; xlv. 7, 8.

Ver. 18. *entered into his soul;*] The iron chains, with

which he was bound, galled and hurt him exceedingly. This is not mentioned in Genesis.

Ver. 19. *Until the time, &c.*] Till the time came for his character being fully known in the court of Pharaoh, he was sorely tried in prison, according to the word or counsel of the Lord.

Ver. 22. *That he might inform*] That he might command the nobles and great men of Pharaoh, and rule them at his pleasure.—*his senators.*] His counsellors.

Ver. 23. *Israel also*] *Gen.* xlvi. 1—7.—*of Ham.*] Of Egypt. See *Psalm* lxxviii. 52.

Ver. 24, 25.] *Exod.* i. 7—11.

Ver. 26. 42.] *Exod.* v.—xvii. *Psalm* lxxviii.

Ver. 36. *He brought them, &c.*] *Exod.* x. 26; xii. 35, 36.

Ver. 39. *the bread of heaven.*] The manna which came down from heaven. *Psalm* lxxviii. 25.

Ver. 43. *the labours of the people*] The fruits of their labour, their corn and vineyards. *Josh.* xxi. 43—45.

Every time we read an account of the Lord's mercy to Israel, and of the faithful performance of all His promises, let it serve, by His grace, to "increase our faith," and move us to depend upon Him for every blessing, according to His holy word. Whatever may happen, either to ourselves or our Church, let us not be tempted to doubt or fear, but "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised." *Heb.* x. 23. Very often what seems to be a great evil to us, is sent by the Lord as an instrument of great good: to prepare the way, by His unseen hand, for our preservation and blessing. Did He work such wonders for His people by Joseph, and Moses, and Joshua? How much more may we trust to His goodness and power, through our Almighty Redeemer, of whom these holy men of old were but the feeble types and patterns! Yea, and how much experience have we already had of His wonder-working power and grace! How much has the Lord Jesus done for His people from the earliest days of the Gospel until now! How much has He done for ourselves! Bringing us from the bondage of sin to liberty and life; feeding us with the "true bread" of heaven; supporting and comforting our souls under every trouble. The Lord has indeed remembered

His covenant with Abraham, in raising up His promised Seed, "in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed;" and we Gentiles are in Him become a "chosen generation to show forth his praises." 1 *Pet.* ii. 9, 10. But let it never for a moment be forgotten, that our Lord, by all He does for us, intends to teach and incline and enable us to "keep his statutes and observe his laws:" thus to glorify Him, first here on earth, and then in heaven for ever.

QUESTIONS.

Explain ver. 4.—The judgments of His mouth?—What was God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?—For an everlasting testament?—They strangers in the land?—Who and where?—Mine anointed?—My prophets?—For a dearth?—Whom did God send before them into Egypt?—What was done to him?—That his cause was known?—The king sent?—What king?—Explain ver. 22.—Ham?—Where do we find an account of what God did for His people in Egypt, &c.?—The labours of the people?—For what end did God perform all these wonders for them?—What may we learn from this?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM CVI.

Here the Psalmist sets forth the mercies of God to Israel of old, and shows the dreadful manner in which those mercies had been abused.

1 O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious: and his mercy endureth for ever.

2 Who can express the noble acts of the Lord: or show forth all his praise?

3 Blessed are they that alway keep judgement: and do righteousness.

4 Remember me, O Lord, according to the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;

5 That I may see the felicity of thy chosen: and rejoice in the gladness of thy people, and give thanks with thine inheritance.

6 We have sinned with our fathers: we have done amiss, and dealt wickedly.

7 Our fathers regarded not thy wonders in Egypt, neither kept they thy great goodness in remembrance: but were disobedient at the sea, even at the Red Sea.

8 Nevertheless, he helped them for his name's sake: that

he might make his power to be known.

9 He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up : so he led them through the deep, as through a wilderness.

10 And he saved them from the adversary's hand : and delivered them from the hand of the enemy.

11 As for those that troubled them, the waters overwhelmed them : there was not one of them left.

12 Then believed they his words : and sang praise unto him.

13 But within a while they forgat his works : and would not abide his counsel.

14 But lust came upon them in the wilderness : and they tempted God in the desert.

15 And he gave them their desire : and sent leanness withal into their soul.

16 They angered Moses also in the tents : and Aaron the saint of the Lord.

17 So the earth opened, and swallowed up Dathan : and covered the congregation of Abiram.

18 And the fire was kindled in their company : the flame burnt up the ungodly.

19 They made a calf in Horeb : and worshipped the molten image.

20 Thus they turned their glory : into the similitude of a calf that eateth hay.

21 And they forgat God their Saviour : who had done so great things in Egypt;

22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham : and fearful things by the Red Sea.

23 So he said he would have destroyed them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the gap : to turn away his wrathful indignation, lest he should destroy them.

24 Yea, they thought scorn of that pleasant land : and gave no credence unto his word;

25 But murmured in their tents : and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord.

26 Then lift he up his hand against them : to overthrow them in the wilderness;

27 To cast out their seed among the nations : and to scatter them in the lands.

28 They joined themselves unto Baal-peor : and ate the offerings of the dead.

29 Thus they provoked him to anger with their own inventions : and the plague was great among them.

30 Then stood up Phinees and prayed : and so the plague ceased.

31 And that was counted unto him for righteousness : among all posterities for evermore.

32 They angered him also at the waters of strife : so that he punished Moses for their sakes;

33 Because they provoked his spirit : so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.

34 Neither destroyed they the heathen : as the Lord commanded them;

35 But were mingled among the heathen : and learned their works.

36 Insomuch that they worshipped their idols, which turned to their own decay: yea, they offered their sons and their daughters unto devils;

37 And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters: whom they offered unto the idols of Canaan; and the land was defiled with blood.

38 Thus were they stained with their own works: and went a whoring with their own inventions.

39 Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against his people: insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.

40 And he gave them over into the hand of the heathen: and they that hated them were lords over them.

41 Their enemies oppressed them: and had them in subjection.

42 Many a time did he deliver them: but they rebelled against him with their own inventions, and were brought down in their wickedness.

43 Nevertheless, when he saw their adversity: he heard their complaint.

44 He thought upon his covenant, and pitied them, according unto the multitude of his mercies: yea, he made all those that led them away captive to pity them.

45 Deliver us, O Lord, our God, and gather us from among the heathen: that we may give thanks unto thy holy name, and make our boast of thy praise.

46 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting, and world without end: and let all the people say, Amen.

Ver. 3. *keep judgement:*] "Keep God's statutes and observe his laws." *Psalm* cv. 44.

Ver. 5. *the felicity*] The happiness. In the *Bible* it is, "the good of thy chosen."—*thine inheritance.*] Those who are heirs of Thy kingdom.

Ver. 6. *with our fathers:*] In like manner as our fathers did, by unbelief and disobedience.

Ver. 7. *at the Red Sea.*] *Exod.* xiv. 10—12.

Ver. 9. *as through a wilderness.*] That is, on dry land.

Ver. 13—15.] See *Exod.* xv. 24. *Numb.* xi. 4. 33.—*would not abide his counsel.*] Would not trust His word, and wait with faith and patience for His promised blessing.—*lust*] evil desire.—*tempted God*] Tried, to see if He could help them.—*sent leanness*] Sent a plague, which wasted their bodies.

Ver. 16—18.] See *Numb.* xvi.

Ver. 19. *They made a calf*] *Exod.* xxxii.—*molten*] Made of gold, melted by the fire.

Ver. 20. *their glory :*] That which was their real glory, the worship of God in the ark.—*the similitude*] The likeness. They left the ark for the golden calf.

Ver. 22. *of Ham :*] Of Egypt. *Psalm* lxxviii. 52.

Ver. 23. *the gap :*] A broken part of a hedge or wall, through which an enemy might enter. Israel's wall of defence had been broken down by idolatry and sin; and God would have entered as an enemy with His wrath, had not Moses stood in the way, with his tears and his prayers. How well may this remind us of the Lord Jesus interceding for His people! *Exod.* xxxii. 10—14. 32.

Ver. 24. *thought scorn*] Made light of the precious promise.—*no credence*] No belief. See *Numb.* xiii. xiv.

Ver. 26. *lift he up his hand*] Then He sware against them, *Psalm* xcv. 11. To "lift up the hand" was a form of oath. *Gen.* xiv. 22.

Ver. 28. *Baal-peor :*] The false God of the Moabites. *Numb.* xxv.—*of the dead.*] Of the dead idol: so called as distinguished from the living and true God. They partook of those things which had been offered to the idol, and feasted with its worshippers.

Ver. 29. *with their own inventions :*] With the false worship, and all the abominable practices which they had invented in defiance of God's word.

Ver. 30. *and prayed :*] Rather, he "executed judgement," according to the *Bible Version. Numb.* xxv. 7—9.

Ver. 31. *for righteousness :*] *Numb.* xxv. 10. 13.—*all posterities*] All generations.

Ver. 32, 33.] See *Numb.* xx. 2—13.—*unadvisedly*] Rashly, so as no wise man would advise.

Ver. 34, 35.] See *Judg.* ii. 2, 3.

Ver. 36. *turned to their own decay :*] Were a snare and ruin to them.—*unto devils ;*] Unto false gods, which are agents and representatives of the devil. See *Deut.* xii. 31. 2 *Kings* xvii. 17. 1 *Cor.* x. 20.

Ver. 38. *stained*] Corrupted, defiled.—*went a whoring, &c.*] Were unfaithful to God, as a false wife to a husband. *Levit.* xxv. 5. *Psalm* lxxiii. 26.

Ver. 39. *abhorred*] Loathed or hated.

Ver. 43. *their adversity :*] Their trouble.

Ver. 45. *Deliver us, &c.*] This Psalm was written at a time when Israel was in captivity, led away into bondage, among the heathen ; long after David's death ; hence the fitness of the prayer with which it ends.

The history of Israel is almost one continued account of mercies on God's part, and rebellion on their own : the more they were favoured, the more they sinned. It is shocking and grievous to think that the heart of man should be so ungrateful, and depraved, and abandoned. But Christians have sinned against the light as much as the Jews : our eyes, indeed, have not beheld such astonishing signs and wonders as they saw ; but Jesus and His apostles wrought even greater wonders than those which were performed in the sight of Israel ; and all these wonders we profess to believe, as fully as if we had seen them done. And the way of the kingdom of heaven is opened to us far more clearly than it was to the people of old. Jesus has suffered, and died, and risen again for us ; He has taught us perfectly " what we must do to be saved ;" He sends us, in a larger measure, the grace of His Holy Spirit, to enlighten and guide, and strengthen and comfort us, in every difficulty and every trial. And yet, under all these mighty privileges and advantages, how many are there who rebel against Him in the most wicked and shameless manner : who are no better in heart or character than the worst of the guilty Israelites ! O let us tremble, favoured as we are with the glorious light of the Gospel, at the very thought of such hateful ingratitude and sin. O let us turn unto the Lord of our life with all our heart and soul ; and pray that we may serve Him with holy fear and holy love. " For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace ?" *Heb.* x. 26—29. " Wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." *Ezek.* xviii. 32.

QUESTIONS.

The felicity?—Sinned with our fathers?—As through a wilderness?—Would not abide His counsel?—Lust came upon them?—Where?—Tempted God?—Sent leanness?—The molten image?—Explain ver. 20.—In the gap?—Credence?—Lift He up His hand?—What was Baal-peor?—The offerings of the dead?—Their own inventions?—Posterities?—Unadvisedly?—Explain ver. 36.—Were stained?—Adversity?—When was this Psalm composed?—And what may we learn from it?

THE TWENTY-SECOND DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM CVII.

God's redeemed people are exhorted to thank Him for His mercies, which are here set forth in various ways. The Lord has power to bestow favours and blessings, and power to take them away.

1 O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious : and his mercy endureth for ever.

2 Let them give thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed : and delivered from the hand of the enemy;

3 And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west : from the north, and from the south.

4 They went astray in the wilderness out of the way : and found no city to dwell in;

5 Hungry and thirsty : their soul fainted in them.

6 So they cried unto the Lord in their trouble : and he delivered them from their distress.

7 He led them forth by the right way : that they might go to the city where they dwelt.

8 O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness : and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men !

9 For he satisfieth the empty soul : and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

10 Such as sit in darkness,

and in the shadow of death : being fast bound in misery and iron ;

11 Because they rebelled against the words of the Lord : and lightly regarded the counsel of the Most Highest;

12 He also brought down their heart through heaviness : they fell down, and there was none to help them.

13 So when they cried unto the Lord in their trouble : he delivered them out of their distress.

14 For he brought them out of darkness, and out of the shadow of death : and brake their bonds in sunder.

15 O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness : and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men!

16 For he hath broken the gates of brass : and smitten the bars of iron in sunder.

17 Foolish men are plagued for their offence : and because of their wickedness.

18 Their soul abhorred all manner of meat : and they were even hard at death's door.

19 So when they cried unto the Lord in their trouble : he delivered them out of their distress.

20 He sent his word, and healed them : and they were saved from their destruction.

21 O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness : and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men!

22 That they would offer unto him the sacrifice of thanksgiving : and tell out his works with gladness!

23 They that go down to the sea in ships : and occupy their business in great waters;

24 These men see the works of the Lord : and his wonders in the deep.

25 For at his word the stormy wind ariseth : which lifteth up the waves thereof.

26 They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep : their soul melteth away because of the trouble.

27 They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man : and are at their wit's end.

28 So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble : he delivereth them out of their distress.

29 For he maketh the storm to cease : so that the waves thereof are still.

30 Then are they glad, because they are at rest : and so he bringeth them unto the haven where they would be.

31 O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness : and declare the wonders that he doeth for the children of men!

32 That they would exalt him also in the congregation of the people : and praise him in the seat of the elders!

33 Who turneth the floods into a wilderness : and drieth up the water-springs.

34 A fruitful land maketh he barren : for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

35 Again he maketh the wilderness a standing water : and water-springs of a dry ground.

36 And there he setteth the hungry : that they may build them a city to dwell in ;

37 That they may sow their land, and plant vineyards : to yield them fruits of increase.

38 He blessed them, so that they multiply exceedingly : and suffereth not their cattle to decrease.

39 And again, when they are minished, and brought low : through oppression, through any plague, or trouble ;

40 Though he suffer them to be evil intreated through tyrants : and let them wander out of the way in the wilderness ;

41 Yet helpeth he the poor out of misery : and maketh him housholds like a flock of sheep.

42 The righteous will consider this, and rejoice : and the mouth of all wickedness shall be stopped.

43 Whoso is wise will ponder these things : and they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.

Ver. 3. *out of the lands,*] Out of the countries of the heathen. *Psalm* cvi. 45.

Ver. 4. *in the wilderness*] Many of the Israelites, when scattered by their enemies, might have been driven into the wilderness, from which they were recalled by God's mercy: and this represents our spiritual redemption by Christ Jesus, from the wilderness and misery of sin.

Ver. 8.] This verse, which is several times repeated, may be considered as the chorus of the Psalm.

Ver. 9. *and filleth, &c.*] *Luke* i. 53.

Ver. 10. *in the shadow of death :*] In fear and danger of dying. *Ver.* 18. *Psalm* xxiii. 4.—*in misery and iron ;*] In chains of misery, in galling fetters.

Ver. 12. *brought down, &c.*] "Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop." *Prov.* xii. 25. "Humble yourselves, therefore," &c. 1 *Pet.* v. 6.

Ver. 16. *gates of brass—bars of iron*] He hath set the prisoners free, notwithstanding the great obstacles, and the many strong holds.

Ver. 17. *Foolish men*] *Psalm* xiv. 1.—*plagued*] Troubled, afflicted.

Ver. 20. *sent his word, &c.*] He ordered their deliverance.

Ver. 25—30.] These verses contain the most striking and true and awful description of a sudden storm at sea.

Ver. 27. *at their wit's end.*] Know not what to do.

Ver. 28. *So when they cry*] The affrighted sailors will

pray in a storm, if at no time else. So, in all the storms of life, prayer is the only remedy, God the only help and refuge.

Ver. 29.] See *Matt.* viii. 26, where we find that the same divine power was exercised by Christ.

Ver. 30. *the haven*] The port or harbour, a place of safety for the vessel.

Ver. 32. *in the seat of the elders!*] When they sit in judgment, in their council or assembly.

Ver. 33—35.] These verses intimate that God can change the face of any country or place, from plenty to barrenness, or from barrenness to plenty; and, in like manner, He can enrich any country or place with spiritual blessings, and take them away when abused. See *Isaiah* xxxii. 9—19.

Ver. 39. *minished,*] Lessened and reduced.

Ver. 40. *tyrants:*] Cruel governors.

Ver. 41. *like a flock of sheep.*] So many in number: God maketh, out of a desolate people, a large and flourishing nation.

Ver. 42, 43.] See *Deut.* xxxii. 29. 36. 43.

Wherever we turn our thoughts, we perceive the effects of the Lord's goodness, which should always call forth our grateful praises, whether it be shown to ourselves or to others. God is in every blessing; all the common events of every day, which the world calls good fortune or chance: all the comforts and conveniences of life are ordered and sent by the Lord of heaven and earth: whatever means or instruments may be employed, He is the great Author and Agent: to Him our hearts should ever be open, to Him our souls continually lifted up. But the Lord sends troubles to His people as well as blessings, sorrow as well as joy: whenever, therefore, "our heart is bowed down through heaviness," let us be diligent in searching out the cause: sin is the parent of misery; "foolish men are plagued for their offence," and "because they rebelled against the Lord." Let us consider our ways in the spirit of deep repentance; and desire, above all things, that the Lord may return to us in consolation and peace; and let us never forget to pray, "to fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker." Prayer is the sinner's only hope, his only means of blessing; and it is the sure and unfailing anchor of the soul, amidst all the winds and waves of trouble. In this Psalm we are four times encouraged

in this gracious manner, "when they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, he delivered them out of their distress." This was the cry of God's people in every difficulty and danger, and this cry was never raised in vain. O let us go on day by day, praying for mercies and praising God for all He gives, till we have passed through the scenes, and cleared all the dangers, of this changeable world, even till we come to the gate, and lie down in the shadow of death; and then the iron bars of that gate shall be broken, and we shall rise again, and be led to the haven of eternal rest: we shall go to our own home, to the heavenly city, "and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell amongst us; we shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more —For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed us, and shall lead us unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes." *Rev.* vii. 15—17.

QUESTIONS.

Let them give thanks—who?—What did they do in their trouble, &c.?—O that men, &c. would do what?—In the shadow of death?—In misery and iron?—Why were they so tried?—Explain ver. 16.—Sent His word?—Give some account of the vessel in a storm.—The haven?—In the seat of the elders?—Explain ver. 33—35.—Minished?—Tyrants?—Households like a flock of sheep?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM CVIII.

This Psalm is taken from two others; the first five verses are nearly the same as the last five in Psalm lvii., *and the rest are found in* Psalm lx. 5—12. *The strain of gratitude and triumph which runs through this Psalm, makes it suitable to the service of the Church on* Ascension-day. *See the explanation of* Psalms lvii. lx.

1 O God, my heart is ready, my heart is ready: I will sing and give praise with the best member that I have.

2 Awake, thou lute, and harp: I myself will awake right early.

3 I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing praises unto thee among the nations.

4 For thy mercy is greater than the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.

5 Set up thyself, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory above all the earth.

6 That thy beloved may be

delivered : let thy right hand save them, and hear thou me.

7 God hath spoken in his holiness : I will rejoice therefore, and divide Sichem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.

8 Gilead is mine, and Manasses is mine : Ephraim also is the strength of my head.

9 Judah is my law-giver, Moab is my wash-pot : over Edom will I cast out my shoe ; upon Philistia will I triumph.

10 Who will lead me into the strong city : and who will bring me into Edom ?

11 Hast not thou forsaken us, O God : and wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts ?

12 O help us against the enemy : for vain is the help of man.

13 Through God we shall do great acts : and it is he that shall tread down our enemies.

PSALM CIX.

David, in denouncing judgment upon his enemies, and especially upon some particular enemy, sets forth the doom of the traitor Judas, and the rest of the rebellious Jews.

1 Hold not thy tongue, O God of my praise : for the mouth of the ungodly, yea, the mouth of the deceitful is opened upon me.

2 And they have spoken against me with false tongues : they compassed me about also with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause.

3 For the love that I had unto them, lo, they take now my contrary part : but I give myself unto prayer.

4 Thus have they rewarded me evil for good : and hatred for my good will.

5 Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him : and let Satan stand at his right hand.

6 When sentence is given upon him, let him be condemned : and let his prayer be turned into sin.

7 Let his days be few : and let another take his office.

8 Let his children be fatherless : and his wife a widow.

9 Let his children be vagabonds, and beg their bread : let them seek it also out of desolate places.

10 Let the extortioner consume all that he hath : and let the stranger spoil his labour.

11 Let there be no man to pity him : nor to have compassion upon his fatherless children.

12 Let his posterity be destroyed : and in the next generation let his name be clean put out.

13 Let the wickedness of his fathers be had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord : and let not the sin of his mother be done away.

14 Let them alway be before

the Lord : that he may root out the memorial of them from off the earth ;

15 And that, because his mind was not to do good : but persecuted the poor helpless man, that he might slay him that was vexed at the heart.

16 His delight was in cursing, and it shall happen unto him : he loved not blessing, therefore shall it be far from him.

17 He clothed himself with cursing, like as with a raiment : and it shall come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

18 Let it be unto him as the cloke that he hath upon him : and as the girdle that he is alway girded withal.

19 Let it thus happen from the Lord unto mine enemies : and to those that speak evil against my soul.

20 But deal thou with me, O Lord God, according unto thy name : for sweet is thy mercy.

21 O deliver me, for I am helpless and poor : and my heart is wounded within me.

22 I go hence like the shadow that departeth : and am driven away as the grasshopper.

23 My knees are weak through fasting : my flesh is dried up for want of fatness.

24 I became also a reproach unto them : they that looked upon me shaked their heads.

25 Help me, O Lord my God : O save me according to thy mercy ;

26 And they shall know, how that this is thy hand : and that thou, Lord, hast done it.

27 Though they curse, yet bless thou : and let them be confounded that rise up against me ; but let thy servant rejoice.

28 Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame : and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a cloke.

29 As for me, I will give great thanks unto the Lord with my mouth : and praise him among the multitude.

30 For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor : to save his soul from unrighteous judges.

Ver. 1. *God of my praise :*] The God whom I praise ; to whom all my praise is due.

Ver. 2. *with false tongues :*] *Psalm* lii. 5. The same person may be alluded to in both Psalms.

Ver. 3. *For the love*] This shows that David had no private feeling of enmity against them, but had loved them even though they were unfriendly in their hearts.—*my contrary part :*] A part against me, they are my adversaries.

Ver. 4. *evil for good, &c.*] This verse, and indeed the four first verses, very clearly apply to Jesus Christ, who

therefore may be regarded as the speaker and prophet in this Psalm.

Ver. 5—19. *Set thou, &c.*] These verses have been the cause of great offence to many weak minds; it has been supposed that David here breathes a spirit of deep and cruel malice: but there is no necessity for any such conclusion. See *Psalm* v. 11; lxix. 23—29. David is publicly declaring, and not privately desiring, the wrath of God upon the wicked; and there is no more revenge in his language, than in that of Moses, when he records the curses against Israel in *Deut.* xxviii., or than in the arm of Joshua, the servant of the Lord, when he destroyed the guilty inhabitants of Canaan. In fact, these words of the Psalm are properly the words of the Messiah, foreshowing the fate of Judas and his wicked brethren.

Ver. 5. *an ungodly man*] A cruel and wicked king. The Jews, as "they would not have Christ to reign over them," have suffered from severe rulers ever since.—*let Satan*] The enemy, or accuser. Satan is called the accuser of the brethren. *Rev.* xii. 9, 10.—*at his right hand.*] In a court of justice, the accuser of a criminal stood at his right hand. See *Zech.* iii. 1.

Ver. 6. *let his prayer*] His prayer being the prayer of fear, and not of faith and repentance, will be rejected as the work of sin.

Ver. 7. *and let another*] St. Peter has assured us that these words are written of Judas, *Acts* i. 20: "his bishoprick let another take;" bishopric meaning overseership, or "office." See on *Psalm* lxix. 26.

Ver. 8, 9.] These two verses foretel the wretchedness that would befall the families of David's persecutor and Christ's betrayer.—*vagabonds,*] Wandering about. This is a true description of all the Jewish people, since they rejected and crucified the Lord Jesus; they have wandered about from country to country all over the world.

Ver. 10. *extortioner*] One who will have more than his due, taking it by fraud and robbery.

Ver. 12. *Let his posterity*] The family of David's enemy is unknown; the family of Judas was soon forgotten; and the Jews themselves lost their name, as a people and kingdom, in the very next generation.

Ver. 14. *before the Lord:*] Brought before Him for judgment.—*the memorial*] The remembrance, that they be no more remembered as a nation. Thus did our Lord denounce vengeance against them. *Matt.* xxiii. 38.

Ver. 17. *He clothed himself*] See *Matt.* xxvii. 25. Where we read the fulfilment of this declaration.—*it shall come, &c.*] The curse shall come into his innermost soul, like water which finds its way into every crack, and like oil when rubbed into the flesh; there shall be no escape from it.

Ver. 20. *unto thy name:*] Thy goodness and truth.

Ver. 22. *like the shadow*] *Psalm* cii. 11.—*as the grasshopper.*] The locust. These insects often appeared in vast numbers, like a cloud, and are driven about by the wind.

Ver. 24. *shaked their heads.*] See *Psalm* xxii. 7, and *Matt.* xxvii. 39.

Ver. 30. *at the right hand*] The advocate or pleader (as well as the accuser, *ver.* 5,) was placed at the right hand.

In all our trials we should call upon the Lord as the "God of our praise," in whom we glory, and whom we delight to worship: we should beg of Him to deliver us for His own Name's sake, according to the greatness of His mercy; that His hand may be glorified, while we are humbled. And if we do, when poor or helpless, submit ourselves to the will of the Almighty, and depend upon His Holy Spirit for aid or blessing, we need not pay any regard to the foul reproaches or curses of ungodly men; the Lord will overrule their anger and turn it to our benefit. Be we careful never to return any violent language, "not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." 1 *Pet.* iii. 9. But though we show a forbearing spirit, and desire to think charitably of all, and pray for all, still the just and holy God is preparing the instruments of wrath against the wicked opposers of His will; against all who despise the riches of His goodness, or neglect the offer of His grace. If men will not turn, and love and serve Him, there is no remedy, but they must die: but God "willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live." And He says to the disobedient of His Church in our day, what He said to the disobedient of old,

"Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" *Ezek.* xviii. 30, 31. "Turn thou us, O Lord, and so we shall be turned;" and let us say and know, from happy experience, that "Sweet is thy mercy."

QUESTIONS.

O God of my praise?—Satan—at his right hand?—Prayer turned into sin?—Explain ver. 7.—to whom does it apply?—And how are all these petitions of David to be explained?—Vagabonds?—Extortioner?—The memorial?—Explain ver. 17.—As the grasshopper?—Shaked their heads?—Stand at the right hand of the poor?

THE TWENTY-THIRD DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM CX.

This Psalm relates altogether to the Messiah, and therefore it is appointed by the Church to be read on Christmas-day. *It describes the power of Christ after His ascension; the priesthood of Christ; and the extension of His kingdom.*

1 The Lord said unto my Lord: Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

2 The Lord shall send the rod of thy power out of Sion: be thou ruler, even in the midst among thine enemies.

3 In the day of thy power shall the people offer thee free-will offerings with an holy worship: the dew of thy birth is of the womb of the morning.

4 The Lord sware, and will not repent: thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech.

5 The Lord upon thy right hand: shall wound even kings in the day of his wrath.

6 He shall judge among the heathen; he shall fill the places with the dead bodies: and smite in sunder the heads over divers countries.

7 He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up his head.

Ver. 1.] David may be understood thus: "The Lord Jehovah said to my Lord Messiah, Thou shalt reign till thou hast put all thine enemies under Thy feet, (1 *Cor.* xv. 25,) till they are all subdued." This was settled in the council of the Godhead from the very beginning; and it is represented to us in a figure, by the Father speaking to the Son, with a promise of power and dominion when the work of redemption was finished. This is the verse which our Lord quotes in His discourse with the Pharisees, (*Matt.* xxii. 41—46,) by which He has plainly informed us, that David's Lord, here spoken of by the Holy Ghost, was no other than the Messiah: how then could He, at the same time, be David's Son? There is but one reasonable answer to be given, that Jesus was of the family of David, a son of David, according to the flesh, (*Rom.* ix. 5,) but David's Lord, according to the Spirit, in His divine nature, as Head of the Church from the beginning of time; being, even when David spake these words, "King of kings and Lord of lords." Jesus Christ was "Emmanuel, God with us," "God manifested in the flesh;" thus He was, in one view, the *Son*, in another view, the *Lord* of David.—*thy footstool*] *Psalm* xcix. 5.

Ver. 2. *The Lord shall send, &c.*] In this verse David addresses himself to his king Messiah.—*the rod of thy power*] The sceptre of Thy kingdom; Thy power and rule shall be established and begin at Sion or Jerusalem, and from thence shall spread over all nations. *Luke* xxiv. 44—49.

Ver. 3. *In the day of thy power*] When Thy power shall be manifested in the conversion of many people, in bearing down all opposition to Thy kingdom.—*free-will offerings*] For the Redeemer's people shall come unto Him gladly, and serve Him with joy. *Isa.* lv. 5.—*the dew of thy birth, &c.*] The meaning of these words is, "Thy children shall be as the dew which is born of the morning:" Thy people shall be as many in number as the drops of morning dew. See *Gen.* xxii. 17.

Ver. 4. *The Lord sware, &c.*] This is the Lord's solemn decree, which standeth firm and fast. David, having spoken of his Messiah as *King*, now proceeds to speak of Him as a *Priest*, as one whose business it was to offer sacrifice for

the sins of the people; and "in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," being "once offered to bear the sins of many." *Heb.* vii. 27, 28; ix. 26. 28. Under the law of Moses, the same person could not be both king and priest; but God declared by Zechariah, that Christ should "be a priest upon his throne." *Zech.* vi. 12, 13.—*after the order of Melchisedech.*] *Gen.* xiv. 18—20. After the manner or likeness of Melchisedech, and not after the rules for the priesthood of Aaron under the law, which required the priests to be of the tribe of Levi, whereas our Lord was of the tribe of Judah, and was "made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." *Heb.* vii. 16. See the whole of *Heb.* vii. on the subject of Melchisedech.

Ver. 5.] These words are addressed to the Father; "The Lord Messiah on thy right hand, &c. (as in *ver.* 1,) shall destroy the mightiest in the day of his judgement and vengeance." *Psalm* ii.

Ver. 6.] These are the proofs of His power and victory. —*divers*] Many.

Ver. 7. *shall drink of the brook, &c.*] Shall be refreshed by wonderful means (like Israel in the wilderness, *Exod.* xvii. 6), and thus "go forth conquering and to conquer." *Rev.* vi. 2.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is one with the Father, "very God of very God," has been manifested in the flesh, David's Son and David's Lord: and having "conquered death and hell," He has ascended to his throne in heaven; and there He sits at the right hand of power, pleading for His people, and "mighty to save." He gained the victory over all His enemies, even "the last enemy, death;" He has conquered as the "Captain of our salvation," that we may go forth under His banners, and "fight the good fight of faith," and conquer also. The "rod of his power" hath been sent forth into our land; His kingdom has been planted here. Have we experienced "the day of his power?" Does His grace reign in our hearts, and manifest itself in our lives? "The life we now live in the flesh, do we live by faith in the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us?" *Gal.* ii. 20. Do we look to Him continually and wholly, as our Prophet, Priest, and King: our Prophet to teach and

guide, our Priest to reconcile and plead, our King to govern us? If so, we have nothing to fear; we "shall drink of the brook in the way" of our earthly pilgrimage; we shall be refreshed on our journey, day by day, with the waters of life and salvation; and at last, having "passed through the valley of the shadow of death," we shall "lift up our heads with joy" on the shores of the heavenly Canaan.

QUESTIONS.

Who is the subject of this Psalm?—Explain ver. 1.—The rod of Thy power?—Out of Sion?—In the day of Thy power?—Free-will offerings?—The dew of Thy birth, &c.?—Explain ver. 4.—To whom is ver. 5 addressed?—What proof of Christ's power and victory are mentioned?—He shall drink, &c.?—What is meant by lifting up His head?

PSALM CXI.

A song of praise for the glorious works of God on behalf of His Church, and therefore appointed as one of the proper Psalms for Easter-day.

1 I will give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart: secretly among the faithful and in the congregation.

2 The works of the Lord are great: sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

3 His work is worthy to be praised, and had in honour: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 The merciful and gracious Lord hath so done his marvellous works: that they ought to be had in remembrance.

5 He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he shall ever be mindful of his covenant.

6 He hath showed his people the power of his works: that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.

7 The works of his hands are verity and judgement: all his commandments are true.

8 They stand fast for ever and ever: and are done in truth and equity.

9 He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever; holy and reverend is his name.

10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do thereafter; the praise of it endureth for ever.

Ver. 1. *secretly, &c.*] In the private company of my pious friends, and in the public assembly of worshippers.

Ver. 2. *sought out*] Diligently observed and considered by pious men. The careless man, who has no delight in the wonderful works of God, takes no notice of them: but His faithful servants find a great pleasure in them, and *seek them out* in their daily walk through life; watchfully minding the dealings of His providence, and the fruits of His grace.

Ver. 5. *given meat*] This may allude to God's feeding His people with manna in the wilderness: God likewise feedeth all them that love Him, both with bodily and spiritual meat, "sending them all things that be needful both for their souls and bodies."

Ver. 6. *the heritage of the heathen.*] The possessions of the heathen nations in the land of Canaan.

Ver. 7. *verity*] Truth: they are things done in fulfilment of His promise.

Ver. 8. *equity.*] Righteousness, justice.

Ver. 9. *He sent redemption*] He delivered His people from their bondage in Egypt, as a sign and type of the deliverance of all mankind from the bondage of sin, by Jesus Christ, whose resurrection set the seal to God's promise and made it sure: for as Christ rose, so will His disciples and followers rise also from sin and death to holiness and life eternal. *Rom.* vi. 1 *Cor.* xv. 20—22.—*reverend*] To be had in respect and honour.

Ver. 10. *the beginning of wisdom:*] No man is truly wise, till he has the fear and reverence of God in his heart; he may have a great deal of worldly wisdom, "which profiteth little;" but he has no knowledge to guide him aright and lead him to a state of salvation. The fear of the Lord is the foundation of all true wisdom. *Job* xxviii. 28. *Prov.* i. 7; ix. 10. Observe, that by "fear" is here meant, not a terrifying and distressful feeling, but a holy and awful respect for God and His commandments, the effect of a true and lively faith.

All the works of God are great: His works of creation to be seen all around us in the world; His works of providence, in feeding and preserving all His creatures, and especially in bestowing blessings upon His righteous servants; and His works

of grace, in bringing lost sinners into the way of salvation, by His Holy Spirit and His holy word; thus, "cleansing them from all unrighteousness," and preparing them for heaven. All these works the children of God should continually and carefully observe; not waiting till their attention is called to them by other people, or by some uncommon event; but looking for them and "seeking them out," every day and hour; not living as if the world was governed by chance, but watching the hand of God in all that concerns them. And whenever we perceive that the Lord has been kind and gracious to us, let us pray to be made thankful; let us rejoice to speak of His loving-kindness among our friends and neighbours; not in a boastful spirit, as if we were more in His favour than others, but humbly and sincerely: and let the sense of His mercies put new life into our praises when we worship in His holy temple. But above all, let us remember that our best acknowledgment of God's mercies, and our best return for them, is a holy life; and that without a holy life no praise can be acceptable to Him. 'The fear of God is the first step to salvation, as it leadeth a sinner to depart from evil, and to do good; to implore pardon, and to sue for grace; to apply to a Saviour for the one, and to a Sanctifier for the other. Religion is the perfection of wisdom, practice the best instructor, and thanksgiving the sweetest refreshment of the soul.'

QUESTIONS.

I will give thanks?—How, and where?—By whom are the works of the Lord sought out?—Hath given meat?—To whom?—The heritage of the heathen?—Verity?—Equity?—Redemption?—Reverend?—What is the beginning of wisdom?—What do we learn from this Psalm?

PSALM CXII.

The blessings attendant upon the righteous, the destruction of the ungodly.

1 Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord: he hath great delight in his commandments.

2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the faithful shall be blessed.

3 Riches and plenteousness shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 Unto the godly there ariseth up light in the darkness: he is merciful, loving, and righteous.

5 A good man is merciful,

and lendeth : and will guide his words with discretion.

6 For he shall never be moved : and the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

7 He will not be afraid of any evil tidings : for his heart standeth fast, and believeth in the Lord.

8 His heart is established, and will not shrink : until he see his desire upon his enemies.

9 He hath dispersed abroad, and given to the poor : and his righteousness remaineth for ever ; his horn shall be exalted with honour.

10 The ungodly shall see it, and it shall grieve him : he shall gnash with his teeth, and consume away ; the desire of the ungodly shall perish.

Ver. 1. *delight in his commandments.*] That which appears to be so forbidding and hard to the ungodly, is to the righteous the greatest delight. *Matt.* xi. 30.

Ver. 2. *His seed*] In God's covenant with Israel many earthly blessings were promised to the faithful ; and among the rest a large and happy family.

Ver. 4. *light in the darkness :*] Supply in want, deliverance in trouble, comfort in sorrow. Perhaps there may be an allusion to the Lord's appearing to the Israelites by night in a pillar of fire, for their assurance and protection. *Exod.* xiv. 19, 20.

Ver. 5. *his words*] In the *Bible Version* it is "guide his affairs ;" by prudent management, he has the more to give away.

Ver. 8.] His confidence and courage are not diminished by any threats or dangers, but continue till his enemies are destroyed.

Ver. 9. *his horn*]. See *Psalm* xviii. 1.

Ver. 10. *gnash with his teeth,*] The expression of rage and despair. *Matt.* viii. 12.

He who bears the character of a righteous man, shall have a "righteous man's reward ;" he shall have as many earthly blessings as conduce to his real good, and he shall be rich in the favour of the Lord. The great drawback from man's happiness, the great plague and misery, is disobedience and sin. The sinner breaks the law of God, and finds it troublesome and hateful ; the little regard which he does pretend to pay to it, is a painful restraint upon him ; and his transgressions bring a burden upon

his conscience. From all this uneasiness the godly man is set free; the commandments of God appear to him so "holy, just, and good," that they afford great joy to his soul, and his obedience to them is a constant source of satisfaction and pleasure. The law of the Lord, instead of being his continual burden, is his continual delight, both in prosperity and adversity. Nothing can deprive him of his reward: when his work is done, his body will go to its repose in the dust, but his name "shall be had in everlasting remembrance;" his good deeds, and especially his charitable deeds, shall be had in honour before God and man. *Matt.* xxv. 34—40. And, whatever may be his lot upon earth, he shall certainly be honoured at the last day; when the thrones of the mighty shall be cast down, and every unrepentant sinner be driven from the presence of his God and Judge, then shall the righteous "be exalted with honour," and partake of the glory of his Redeemer—the author of his faith and the pattern of his charity—and he shall "live for ever."

QUESTIONS.

Who is blessed?—In what hath the righteous great delight?—Light in the darkness?—His horn shall be exalted?—Shall gnash with his teeth?

PSALM CXIII.

An exhortation to praise the Lord for His mercy and condescension, even to the poorest and weakest of His servants. It is one of the proper Psalms for Easter-Day.

1 Praise the Lord, ye servants: O praise the Name of the Lord.

2 Blessed be the name of the Lord: from this time forth for evermore.

3 The Lord's name is praised: from the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same.

4 The Lord is high above all heathen: and his glory above the heavens.

5 Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath his dwelling so high: and yet humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and earth?

6 He taketh up the simple out of the dust: and lifteth the poor out of the mire;

7 That he may set him with the princes: even with the princes of his people.

8 He maketh the barren woman to keep house: and to be a joyful mother of children.

Ver. 3. *from the rising up, &c.*] From east to west, all over the world. This may be considered as one of the many prophecies of the spreading of the Gospel through all nations of the earth.

Ver. 6. *out of the dust—out of the mire;*] From a low and despised condition, 1 *Sam.* ii. 4—10, as in the case of Joseph and of David. The "simple" here mean the meek and harmless, who have none of this world's wisdom, but trust in God to deliver them.

Ver. 8. *the barren woman*] As in the case of Sarah, Hannah, and others. See *Psalm* cxii. 2. Such blessings may be considered as an emblem and foreshowing of God's blessing the barren Gentile world with a multitude of spiritual children. *Isa.* liv. 1. *Gal.* iv. 27.

The Lord's glory is infinitely above the highest heavens; He humbles Himself even in accepting the services of angels and archangels. How great, then, and wonderful is His condescension in regarding the prayers, and providing for the wants, and honouring the persons, even of the poorest and meanest of His fallen creatures, if they look to Him with godly sincerity! Yea, the beloved Son of the Most High God, even He who "was with God and was God," was so merciful that He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." *Phil.* ii. 7, 8. And now on His throne of grace in the heavens, He looks down with compassion upon all the children of poverty and of misery, and "will hear their cry and will help them;" ready He is to "lift them out of the mire" of sinful corruption, and to raise them from the dust: to make the barren soul fruitful, and to fill it with holy rejoicings. "For thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." *Isa.* lvii. 15.

QUESTIONS.

From the rising up, &c.?—The simple?—Out of the dust and mire?—Give some instances of this.—What has been the subject of this Psalm?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM CXIV.

This is another of the Psalms appointed by our Church to be read on Easter-Day. *It celebrates the Exodus* (*or departure*) *of Israel from Egypt, which prefigured the redemption of mankind from sin by Jesus Christ.*

1 When Israel came out of Egypt : and the house of Jacob from among the strange people.

2 Judah was his sanctuary : and Israel his dominion.

3 The sea saw that, and fled : Jordan was driven back.

4 The mountains skipped like rams : and the little hills like young sheep.

5 What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest : and thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?

6 Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams : and ye little hills, like young sheep?

7 Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord : at the presence of the God of Jacob;

8 Who turned the hard rock into a standing water : and the flint-stone into a springing well.

Ver. 1. *the strange people,*] *Psalm* lxxxi. 5.

Ver. 2. *his sanctuary :*] God's sanctuary, amongst whom He dwelt in the ark. *Psalm* lxxviii. 69.

Ver. 3. *saw that,*] The sea acted as if it saw the power and presence of the Lord, and fled from it in fear, ver. 7. See on *Psalm* lxvi. 5. The waters of the Red Sea were divided, when the Israelites came out of Egypt; the waters of Jordan were divided, when they entered Canaan, after wandering in the wilderness forty years.

Ver. 4. *The mountains, &c.*] When the law was delivered, Mount Sinai and the surrounding hills trembled, as if with fear. *Exod.* xix. 16—18.

Ver. 5, 6.] These questions are intended to show and expose the weakness of the creature compared with the Creator. "Why did ye so tremble?" &c.

Ver. 7.] The presence of Jehovah was the cause of these miracles, showing Himself thereby to be the Almighty God of Jacob.

Ver. 8. *into a standing water :*] Or, "into a lake of water." *Exod.* xvii. 6. *Numb.* xx. 11.

As the Lord set Israel free from their cruel slavery in Egypt, by the power of His presence, dividing the raging waters, so does He set all his people free from the more dreadful slavery of sin, by the power of the Lord Jesus, appearing in the flesh, and rising again from the grave. And as the Lord divided the waters of Jordan for the passage of Israel into Canaan, after their wanderings in the wilderness, so does He make a way through the valley of the shadow of death for His people to pass to their possession of the heavenly Canaan, after they have performed their earthly pilgrimage. And if the sea and the mountains are represented as trembling at the presence of the Creator, how should sinners fear before their just and holy Governor and Judge! His voice from Mount Sinai may well alarm those who have broken that holy law, and yet remain under the curse of it: and they who neglect the great salvation of the Gospel, are liable to another and more terrible condemnation. Let us therefore now "prepare to meet our God," that we may not be terrified, but "have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." 1 *John* ii. 28.

QUESTIONS.

The strange people?—Judah was his sanctuary?—Explain ver. 3.—What mountain was moved?—When?—And why?—A standing water?

PSALM CXV.

On the happy prospect of deliverance from heathen enemies, who had been setting up their idols against Jehovah, the God of heaven and earth.

1 Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the praise: for thy loving mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

2 Wherefore shall the heathen say: Where is now their God?

3 As for our God, he is in heaven: he hath done whatsoever pleased him.

4 Their idols are silver and gold: even the work of men's hands.

5 They have mouths, and speak not: eyes have they, and see not.

6 They have ears, and hear not: noses have they, and smell not.

7 They have hands, and handle not; feet have they, and walk not: neither speak they through their throat.

8 They that make them are like unto them: and so are all such as put their trust in them.

9 But thou, house of Israel, trust thou in the Lord: he is their succour and defence.

10 Ye house of Aaron, put

your trust in the Lord : he is their helper and defender.

11 Ye that fear the Lord, put your trust in the Lord : he is their helper and defender.

12 The Lord hath been mindful of us, and he shall bless us : even he shall bless the house of Israel, he shall bless the house of Aaron.

13 He shall bless them that fear the Lord : both small and great.

14 The Lord shall increase you more and more : you and your children.

15 Ye are the blessed of the Lord : who made heaven and earth.

16 All the whole heavens are the Lord's : the earth hath he given to the children of men.

17 The dead praise not thee, O Lord : neither all they that go down into silence.

18 But we will praise the Lord : from this time forth for evermore. Praise the Lord.

Ver. 2. *Where is now their God?*] While the heathen prevailed, they said, "Where is the God of Israel?" meaning that He had no power to help them: but now they could say so no longer, having seen His power.

Ver. 4—7.] In these verses, the weakness and vanity of idols are strikingly compared with the all-sufficiency of the Almighty Creator, the true and living God. See *Isa.* xliv. 1—20.

Ver. 8. *are like unto them :*] The makers are as much without sense or reason, and without any means of help, as the idols themselves are.

Ver. 12. *the house of Israel—the house of Aaron.*] The people and the priests.

Ver. 14. *shall increase you*] See *Psalm* cxii. 2.

Ver. 17. *The dead, &c.*] See *Psalm* vi. 5 ; xxx. 9.

Whenever we are comforted under sorrow, or released from any difficulty or trial ; whenever we obtain any good or blessing, let us never forget to give the glory to God ; for though man may have been an instrument in procuring the benefit, though we may have planned and laboured, or our friends may have used their exertions on our behalf, still the power is from God, who blesses or hinders every means, as "seemeth him good." To Him, therefore, the chief praise is due. It is wel for us that we are not in a land of idols ; and perhaps we think it impossible that we ever could have been so foolish as to bow down to a lifeless image of silver or gold, of wood or stone, which our own hands had made. But it is God alone, who hath "made us to differ" from the heathen, by giving us the

knowledge of Himself in His holy word. Had we been born among them, and had we lived among them, we should no doubt have been like them: but by the mercy of God our lot is cast in a happier land: let us be thankful, and use our high privilege humbly and faithfully. Let us see that we do not make idols of any earthly things, of any objects of pleasure or gain; for whatever we are in the habit of preferring to God, whatever prevents our duty to Him, that is to us an idol. Let us serve our gracious God as long as we live, with all our heart and soul, with all our means and opportunities. Our time is but short; and death will put an end to all our services upon earth. Let us now "redeem the time," make the most of what remains to us, that we may glorify the Lord with our lips and in our lives. Then we shall shortly join the company before the throne, and assist them in blessing our God; and our bodies will be raised from the silent grave, to unite in this delightful work to all eternity.

QUESTIONS.

Repeat the first verse.—On what occasions should we use it ourselves?—Why did the heathen say, "Where is now their God?"—Describe the heathen idols.—Explain ver. 8.—House of Israel?—House of Aaron?—The dead praise not, &c.?—What does this teach us?

THE TWENTY-FOURTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM CXVI.

A song of thanksgiving for deliverance from trouble, especially suited to a recovery from sickness. It is used in our Church at the Thanksgiving of Women after Child-birth.

1 I am well pleased: that the Lord hath heard the voice of my prayer;

2 That he hath inclined his ear unto me: therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

3 The snares of death compassed me round about: and the pains of hell gat hold upon me.

4 I shall find trouble and heaviness, and I will call upon the name of the Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

5 Gracious is the Lord, and righteous: yea, our God is merciful.

6 The Lord preserveth the simple: I was in misery, and he helped me.

7 Turn again then unto thy rest, O my soul : for the Lord hath rewarded thee.

8 And why ? thou hast delivered my soul from death : mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

9 I will walk before the Lord : in the land of the living.

10 I believed, and therefore will I speak ; but I was sore troubled : I said in my haste, All men are liars.

11 What reward shall I give unto the Lord : for all the benefits that he hath done unto me ?

12 I will receive the cup of salvation : and call upon the name of the Lord.

13 I will pay my vows now in the presence of all his people : right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

14 Behold, O Lord, how that I am thy servant : I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid ; thou hast broken my bonds in sunder.

15 I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving : and will call upon the name of the Lord.

16 I will pay my vows unto the Lord, in the sight of all his people : in the courts of the Lord's house, even in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise the Lord.

Ver. 1. *of my prayer ;*] This shows that the Psalmist had recourse to prayer, as the only means of obtaining God's blessing ; and that his deliverance was sent in answer to his prayer.

Ver. 3.] See *Psalm* xviii. 3, 4.

Ver. 4. *I shall find—I will call.*] Rather, "I found," and "I called," according to the *Bible Version :* and this was my prayer, "O Lord, I beseech thee," &c.

Ver. 6. *the simple :*] See *Psalm* cxiii. 6.

Ver. 7. *unto thy rest,*] Dismiss thy anxious fears, O my soul, and return to thy state of quietness and confidence, for the Lord hath dealt mercifully with thee.

Ver. 8. *thou hast delivered*] Thou, O God.—*my soul*] My life.

Ver. 9. *I will walk, &c.*] This was the proper fruit of God's mercies ; this is the purpose for which life is prolonged, to be spent in His service.

Ver. 10. *will I speak ;*] "Have I spoken," as in ver. 4. I believe in the power and goodness of God, and therefore I prayed to Him.—*in my haste,*] When I fled for fear, or "in my impatience."—*All men are liars.*] There is no trust to be placed in them ; all human means of deliverance are gone : there is no prospect of it.

Ver. 11. *What reward*] What return shall I make? This should be the inquiry and study of every one, when he receives a blessing from God.

Ver. 12. *the cup of salvation:*] The pious Jews, when blessed and favoured in any particular manner, not only celebrated it at their public feasts, but had also a custom of calling their family and friends together, and taking a cup of wine; and as they drank of it they mentioned the blessing, and gave thanks to God; then the rest partook of it, to show their interest, and unite their voice of thanksgiving on the occasion. Thus it was a solemn service of praise; and the cup was called "the cup of deliverances," or, "the cup of salvation." Our Lord seems to have observed this custom, in regard to the Passover (*Luke* xxii. 17); and at the same time He took occasion to institute His Holy Supper, in which He has provided for us Christians a "cup of salvation," in a far better and higher sense.

Ver. 13. *I will pay my vows*] I will render, now that I am delivered, the service which I promised in my trouble. This is a point in which too many fail: they promise much in time of sickness or adversity; but on returning health or prosperity, they forget to pay. If we do so, the Lord may not help us again.—*right dear, &c.*] The death of the Lord's people is a very precious and important matter in His sight; He will not suffer them to be cut off before their time, before they have "worked out their salvation," before they are ripe for glory. *Psalm* lxxii. 14.

Ver. 14. *of thine handmaid;*] See *Psalm* lxxxvi. 16.

Ver. 15. *the sacrifice*] See *Psalm* iv. 5.

In every sore trial, under every burden of sickness or sorrow, "let our requests be made known unto God:" He can help us by what means He pleases, and without Him no means can prosper. The language of humble, believing prayer is sometimes, under some troubles and temptations, the only safe language we can use. And if it be that we have sinned, if we are grieving under a load of guilt, the remedy is the same: let us pray—"Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul." And if it should please God to deliver us, and give us rest, let us still pray—that we may have a deep and grateful sense of His unde-

served mercy, that we may keep in mind all our resolutions and promises. In the day of our weakness and fear, the spirit and desire of repentance came upon us: and we concluded with ourselves, perhaps talked with our friends and our minister, perhaps made a vow to our God, of what we would hereafter do, and how we would hereafter live: let us then remember this, for God remembers it. Let us do our utmost, let it be our whole purpose and study, to show our gratitude and sincerity; to devote our lives to the service of Him who has so long spared them, who has freed us from all evil, and bestowed upon us every blessing we enjoy. If we "walked before him in the land of the living," and are mindful of our duty to Him, He will continue to protect us; He will not suffer us to die, till our work of faith, and holiness, and righteousness, is fully accomplished, till He has made us ready for the change; and then He will remove us from the land of sorrow, and take us to Himself, to our eternal reward in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. There we shall sing new songs of praise, never ending, ever new, in "the Jerusalem which is above." Having devoutly partaken of the "cup of salvation" at our Lord's table upon earth, we shall receive it with joy at the "marriage supper of the Lamb," "in the courts of the Lord's house," in the presence of all His redeemed people; and in that cup there is no mixture of sorrow.

QUESTIONS.

The snares of death—the pains of hell?—I said in my haste, All men are liars?—What reward shall I give?—The cup of salvation?—Pay my vows?—Right dear, &c. ver. 13?—The son of Thine handmaid?—The sacrifice of thanksgiving?

PSALM CXVII.

This short Psalm seems altogether intended to foretel the joy of all the world at the coming of the Messiah, to give salvation unto all people. Rom. xv. 8—11.

1 O praise the Lord, all ye heathen: praise him, all ye nations.
2 For his merciful kindness is ever more and more towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise the Lord.

PSALM CXVIII.

It is thought that this Psalm was composed by David, when he was newly settled in the kingdom, and had brought up the ark of God to his royal city: he ascribes the glory to God. But the Messiah and His triumph are also intended; therefore the Psalm is appointed for Easter-Day.

1 O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious : because his mercy endureth for ever.

2 Let Israel now confess, that he is gracious : and that his mercy endureth for ever.

3 Let the house of Aaron now confess : that his mercy endureth for ever.

4 Yea, let them now that fear the Lord confess : that his mercy endureth for ever.

5 I called upon the Lord in trouble : and the Lord heard me at large.

6 The Lord is on my side : I will not fear what man doeth unto me.

7 The Lord taketh my part with them that help me ; therefore shall I see my desire upon mine enemies.

8 It is better to trust in the Lord : than to put any confidence in man.

9 It is better to trust in the Lord : than to put any confidence in princes.

10 All nations compassed me round about : but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them.

11 They kept me in on every side, they kept me in, I say, on every side : but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them.

12 They came about me like bees, and are extinct even as the fire among the thorns : for in the name of the Lord I will destroy them.

13 Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall : but the Lord was my help.

14 The Lord is my strength, and my song : and is become my salvation.

15 The voice of joy and health is in the dwellings of the righteous : the right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass.

16 The right hand of the Lord hath the pre-eminence : the right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass.

17 I shall not die, but live : and declare the works of the Lord.

18 The Lord hath chastened and corrected me : but he hath not given me over unto death.

19 Open me the gates of righteousness : that I may go into them, and give thanks unto the Lord.

20 This is the gate of the Lord : the righteous shall enter into it.

21 I will thank thee, for thou hast heard me : and art become my salvation.

22 The same stone which the builders refused : is become the head-stone in the corner.

23 This is the Lord's doing : and it is marvellous in our eyes.

24 This is the day which the Lord hath made : we will rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Help me now, O Lord : O Lord, send us now prosperity.

26 Blessed be he that cometh in the Name of the Lord : we have wished you good luck, ye that are of the house of the Lord.

27 God is the Lord who hath showed us light : bind the sacrifice with cords, yea, even unto the horns of the altar.

28 Thou art my God, and I will thank thee : thou art my God, and I will praise thee.

29 O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious : and his mercy endureth for ever.

Ver. 2, 3. *Israel—Aaron*] See *Psalm* cxv. 12.

Ver. 5. *heard me at large.*] Answered me, and set me at liberty. *Psalm* xviii. 19.

Ver. 10. *All nations*] All the nations round about compassed me.

Ver. 12. *are extinct*] Are extinguished, or put out very soon, like a short blaze of thorns. See *Psalm* lviii. 8.

Ver. 13. *Thou*] Thou, O mine enemy.—*sore*] In a grievous and terrible manner.

Ver. 14. *my strength, and my song :*] The means of my strength, and the subject of my song.

Ver. 16. *the pre-eminence :*] The superiority or rule.

Ver. 19. *Open me*] These words are supposed to be addressed by David to persons within the gates of the Lord's house, when he had arrived there with the ark and the procession attending it; the twentieth verse may perhaps be the answer of those who kept the gates; and in ver. 21, the king praises God for His mercy. The remainder of this Psalm appears to have been sung, in parts, by the king and the people in turns.

Ver. 22. *the head-stone*] David had been refused and cast out by Saul and his people; but yet he had been established on the throne by the mighty power of God. The passage, however, belongs chiefly to the Messiah; and in this sense it is quoted six times in the New Testa-

ment. *Matt.* xxi. 42. *Mark* xii. 10. *Luke* xx. 17. *Acts* iv. 11. *Eph.* ii. 20. 1 *Pet.* ii. 4. 7. It foretels that the Jewish builders, the Scribes and Pharisees, would refuse and reject Christ as a stone in God's Church; but that He would become, notwithstanding, the chief stone in the building, the great strength of the Church, by the wonder-working might of God. And when we consider that the whole world of Jews and Gentiles was set against Jesus and His few helpless followers, the establishment and spreading of His kingdom must be, indeed, "marvellous in the eyes" of all men; and it is a complete proof that the hand of God was in the work, and therefore that the Gospel is true.

Ver. 24. *This is the day, &c.*] Of the day on which Christ rose from the dead, it may especially be said, "This is the day which Jehovah hath made." Then it was that the rejected stone became "the head of the corner:" then it was that Jesus Christ was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." *Rom.* i. 4.—*we will rejoice*] Christians may well rejoice on this day, because it affords to them an earnest and pledge of their own resurrection from the grave, to an endless life in heaven. *Rom.* viii. 11. Christ is "the first fruits of them that slept," of them that died. 1 *Cor.* xv. 20. His followers shall rise as a glorious harvest.

Ver. 25, 26.] Here we find the words which were used by the multitudes, who welcomed Jesus on His entry into Jerusalem. *Matt.* xxi. 9. They "cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." And Hosanna means, Save us now—Help us now—Send us prosperity.

Ver. 26. *good luck,*] Good success, prosperity.

Ver. 27. *showed us light:*] showed us favour.—*even unto the horns*] They used to lead the animal for sacrifice to the horns of the altar, *Exod.* xxvii. 1, 2, that it might be there offered in thanksgiving.

Ver. 29.] The same chorus as at the beginning.

As it is our duty to "humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God," when we are suffering for our sins, when we are wasted

with sickness, or harassed with disappointment, or cast down with grief; so it is also our duty to rejoice before God and be thankful, when He is pleased to remove the burden from us, and visit us with His returning favour: gratefully and openly should we acknowledge, that "the Lord has been on our side," and has delivered us from the enemies which were oppressing our bodies and our souls. And knowing assuredly, that "the mercy of the Lord endureth for ever," that "it is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in man," let us make a holy resolution, in the spirit of prayer, henceforth to take the Lord for "our strength and our salvation." Jesus Christ is the great corner-stone of His Church, upon which every other stone must rest; "other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid." 1 *Cor.* iii. 11. And in the prophecy of this Psalm, when compared with its fulfilment, we have a most remarkable instance and proof, that He is "the power of God and the wisdom of God;" that "no weapon formed against (Him) shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against (Him) in judgment he will condemn." *Isa.* liv. 17. Though He was rejected and set at nought by the chief priests and Pharisees, the then builders of the Church, yet, "being chosen of God, and precious," this most valuable stone, thus "despised and rejected of men," thus thrown among the rubbish, and buried in it, was at length, from such a state, exalted to be the chief stone in the building, its whole and sole support and stay. This was the work of God, and the admiration of men and angels. What, indeed, can be more truly marvellous, than that a person, put to death as a malefactor, and laid in the grave, should from thence arise immortal, and become the head of an immortal society; should ascend into heaven, be clothed with power, and crowned with glory; and should prepare a way for the sons of Adam to follow Him into those mansions of eternal bliss? "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief," let each of us say, *Mark* ix. 24; and grant that I may ever have cause to cry, "In all time of my tribulation, in all time of my well-being, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment," "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

QUESTIONS.

Heard me at large?—Extinct?—As the fire among the thorns?—Thou hast thrust?—Who?—My strength and my song?—Pre-eminence?—Explain ver. 22, 23; and show how and where the passage is applied to Christ.—This is the day?—To what day may it be especially applied?—Ver. 25, 26—when were these words addressed to Jesus?—Good luck?—Showed us light?—Even unto the horns?—Which verse is the chorus of this Psalm?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM CXIX.

This Psalm, which was most probably written by David, describes the great excellency of the Word of God, together with the advantage and happiness of keeping it. David appears to be giving us the benefit of his own experience in this important matter.

The Word of God is represented by various terms, all of which have in this Psalm much the same meaning,—law, statutes, precepts or commandments, judgments, ordinances, righteousness, testimonies. They are often used in different senses, (Psalm xix. 7—9,) *but here they signify, all alike, the revealed will and way of God.*

The Psalm is divided into twenty-two equal portions, being as many as there are letters in the Hebrew alphabet; each portion is marked with its particular letter, and every verse in that portion, in the original, begins with the same letter. Thus, the first portion is entitled Aleph, *and every verse of it begins with the letter* Aleph, *the second is entitled* Beth, *and every verse begins with* Beth, *and so on.*

FIRST PORTION.

1 Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way : and walk in the law of the Lord.

2 Blessed are they that keep his testimonies : and seek him with their whole heart.

3 For they who do no wickedness : walk in his ways.

4 Thou hast charged : that we shall diligently keep thy commandments.

5 O that my ways were made so direct : that I might keep thy statutes!

6 So shall I not be confounded : while I have respect unto all thy commandments.

7 I will thank thee with an unfeigned heart : when I shall have learned the judgements of thy righteousness.

8 I will keep thy ceremonies : O forsake me not utterly.

Ver. 1. *that are undefiled*] Sincere and upright; not wilfully and knowingly breaking any of God's commandments, not corrupted or defiled with the habit of any sin.

Ver. 3.] The meaning is, "They who do no wickedness, they who walk in His ways," are blessed.

Ver. 5. *so direct :*] O that my path were made so straight and clear, and my feet so established, that I might keep Thy statutes with my whole heart! Ver. 2.

Ver. 6. *not be confounded :*] Not be put to shame. If I keep some commandments and not others, I may be reproached as an inconsistent person, and so be confounded: but while I make it my object to keep them all, I am in no such danger.

Ver. 7. *unfeigned*] Sincere, true, without any deceit.

Ver. 8. *ceremonies :*] Forms and ordinances of worship: the Psalmist means, that he would observe every thing which was appointed in God's holy Word.

We must here pay a diligent and deep attention to the character of those who are pronounced "blessed:" they give their "whole heart" to God; they desire and seek to obey Him in every thing: they pay an equal respect to all His commandments: there is not a word in the law of life, which they think unnecessary to be observed; it is all of the same authority, coming from the same God, the all-wise and almighty Ruler of heaven and earth; who has a right to their service, whose order and will they dare not dispute. Whatever duty is commanded, it is their purpose and endeavour to do it; whatever is forbidden, it is their purpose and endeavour to avoid it altogether. Though God is gracious, and merciful, and forgiving, "not extreme to mark" our infirmities and imperfections, yet He requires the whole heart, the full purpose of obedience, the undoubting, unfeigned compliance with His holy will; this is given as the true mark of His people, both under the law and the Gospel: thus alone can they be "blessed." *Deut.* iv. 29. 2 *Chron.* xxxi. 21. *Matt.* vi. 24; xxii. 37. *James* ii. 10. 1 *John* iii. 1—9.

QUESTIONS.

What is the subject of this Psalm?—How is it divided?—By what names is the word of God described?—Who are blessed?—Undefiled?—How do they seek the Lord?—Not be confounded?—When shall we not be?—Unfeigned?—Ceremonies?—What is the character of the true servant of God, as set forth in this portion of the Psalm?

SECOND PORTION.

9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way: even by ruling himself after thy word.

10 With my whole heart

have I sought thee : O let me not go wrong out of thy commandments.

11 Thy words have I hid within my heart : that I should not sin against thee.

12 Blessed art thou, O Lord : O teach me thy statutes.

13 With my lips have I been telling : of all the judgements of thy mouth.

14 I have had as great delight in the way of thy testimonies : as in all manner of riches.

15 I will talk of thy commandments : and have respect unto thy ways.

16 My delight shall be in thy statutes : and I will not forget thy word.

Ver. 9. *Wherewithal*] By what means?—*cleanse his way :*] Make his character clean and clear, so as to "escape the pollution that is in the world through lust." 2 *Pet.* i. 4.

Ver. 10. *go wrong out of*] Wander away from.

Ver. 11. *have I hid*] Thy word is my most precious treasure; always ready to be brought forward, on every occasion of trial, for my help and guidance.

Ver. 12. *teach me*] To understand and love Thy commandments.

Ver. 13. *have I been telling :*] If the word of God be studied and loved, and laid up in the heart, we shall be sure to speak of it: "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." *Matt.* xii. 34.

Ver. 14. *of riches.*] As great delight as men have in all the stores of wealth: the meaning is, As the children of this world delight in *their* treasure, so do I delight in *mine* —namely, in the Word of God.

O that this portion of the Psalm were deeply engraved on the mind and heart of every young person! Youth is the season of greatest danger; the passions are strong, the judgment is weak, and there is little experience; the world is flattering and enticing, and Satan is laying his snares in every path. If the young have nothing better to look to than their own reason and earthly counsellors, they are sure to "go wrong;" if they have nothing to lean upon but their own strength, they are sure to fall. Look to the word of God; take that for your guide, your daily guide in life; pray God to fix it in your heart, that you may remember its holy precepts in the hour of temptation, and be preserved by

them from danger. Thus your blessed Saviour baffled and defeated the Tempter, by appealing to the written word (*Matt.* iv. 4. 7. 10); and by the same means you will be enabled to conquer. And never be ashamed of confessing that your hope and trust, your comfort and delight, are resting on the sure promises of God: while the sons and daughters of vanity are fluttering about in their foolish pleasures, which are as a wasting lamp, that will soon expire in outer darkness, do ye, Christian children, delight yourselves wholly in the Lord: there can be no happiness but in Him and from Him. "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee." *Job* xxii. 21. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." *Eccl.* xii. 1. "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." *Matt.* vi. 20.

QUESTIONS.

Wherewithal?—Not go wrong out of?—Have I hid?—Explain ver. 14.—To whom is this portion especially addressed?—How are the young to be preserved aright?

THIRD PORTION.

17 O do well unto thy servant: that I may live, and keep thy word.

18 Open thou mine eyes: that I may see the wondrous things of thy law.

19 I am a stranger upon earth: O hide not thy commandments from me.

20 My soul breaketh out for the very fervent desire: that it hath alway unto thy judgements.

21 Thou hast rebuked the proud: and cursed are they that do err from thy commandments.

22 O turn from me shame and rebuke: for I have kept thy testimonies.

23 Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant is occupied in thy statutes.

24 For thy testimonies are my delight: and my counsellors.

Ver. 17. *O do well, &c.*] Defend me in all dangers, and carry me through all temptations, that my life may be spared for Thy service.

Ver. 18. *Open thou*] Though the Psalmist had declared the great excellency of God's law, and his entire delight in it, and resolution to keep it, yet he could not of himself understand it. The natural man is dark; the eyes of his mind are shut against the wonders of God's

truth: we must pray to God to open them, or we shall never see any holy thing aright. See 1 *Cor.* ii. 9—14.

Ver. 19. *I am a stranger*] Abiding only for a short time:—*hide not*] Therefore show me the way by which I may safely reach my home; the mansion in my Father's house, eternal in the heavens. *John* xiv. 2. 2 *Cor.* v. 1.

Ver. 20. *breaketh out*] Vents itself in earnest prayer; or it may be "breaketh *down*," is faint, and overcome with the greatness of my desire.

Ver. 21. *and cursed, &c.*] See *Deut.* xxvii. 14—26.—*err*] Wander.

Ver. 22. *rebuke:*] Reproach.

Ver. 23. *did sit*] Sit in judgment. He regarded not the word of man, not even of kings, in passing judgment upon him: the word of God was his guide, and God was King and Judge. *Matt.* xxiii. 7—10.

The desire of life is natural to man; and we may pray, and ought to pray, for the healing of every disease, and the removal of every danger; but the great reason why the Christian should desire a longer continuance in this world is, that he may further advance in the knowledge, and love, and service of God; that he may fully work out his salvation till he come "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." *Eph.* iv. 13. And for this end we must constantly and earnestly pray for the teaching of the Holy Spirit: He alone, by whose inspiration the word was written, can enable us to understand, and receive, and obey it: without His guiding grace, we cannot perceive the full meaning and bearing even of the plainest commandment, much less "the deep things of God." The wise men of this world are too proud to seek instruction from the Lord, or even to see that they need it; and they know nothing of the mysteries of His redeeming love; such things are "foolishness" unto them, because there is a "veil upon their heart." 1 *Cor.* i. 23—25. 2 *Cor.* iii. 15. But the weakest and youngest who pray for God's enlightening grace, have their eyes opened to a true understanding of His will and ways: they may not be able to speak, and explain, and dispute, and it is not needful that they should; but they will have the knowledge of the heart; the word of God will be written in their souls; they will believe and adore, they will love and obey; in them the words of the prophet will be happily fulfilled: "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." *Isa.* liv. 13.

QUESTIONS.

O do well?—For what purpose?—Open mine eyes?—That I may see what?—I am a stranger?—Where was his home?—What did he, as a stranger, pray for?—What are they who err from God's commandments?—Where do you read of the curses on the wicked?—Princes did sit?—What do we learn from this portion?

FOURTH PORTION.

25 My soul cleaveth to the dust : O quicken thou me, according to thy word.

26 I have acknowledged my ways, and thou heardest me : O teach me thy statutes.

27 Make me to understand the way of thy commandments : and so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.

28 My soul melteth away for very heaviness : comfort thou me according unto thy word.

29 Take from me the way of lying : and cause thou me to make much of thy law.

30 I have chosen the way of truth : and thy judgements have I laid before me.

31 I have stuck unto thy testimonies : O Lord, confound me not.

32 I will run the way of thy commandments : when thou hast set my heart at liberty.

Ver. 25. *My soul cleaveth, &c.*] I am brought very low, cast down with affliction, so that there is scarcely any life in me.—*quicken thou*] Put new life into me. *Psalm* li. 12.

Ver. 26. *have acknowledged*] I have fully declared before Thee all my purposes and my goings, have laid open my soul; there is no deceitful hiding with me. This is the way to obtain God's mercy; in all our temptations, all our sorrows, and all our undertakings, to spread before Him in prayer, freely and openly, all our circumstances and wants. *Isa.* xxxvii. 14—20.

Ver. 28. *melteth away*] Is faint and languishing. *Psalm* xxii. 14.

Ver. 29, 30. *the way of lying:*] The false way of the world, and sin, and Satan.—*the way of truth:*] The true way of holiness and obedience, "which leadeth unto life." *Matt.* vii. 14. These two ways are proposed to us in the word of God, as a matter of choice. *Deut.* xxx. 19. *Josh.*

xxiv. 15. The Holy Spirit is given to direct us in our choice, "working in us both to will and to do." *Phil.* ii. 13. The Psalmist by this help, like Mary, had "chosen the good part." *Luke* x. 42.

Ver. 31. *I have stuck*] Have chosen the good way, I have kept to it closely and faithfully.—*confound me not.*] Let me never be ashamed.

Ver. 32. *I will run*] A regular straightforward course, of obedience and duty, is often described as "*walking* with God." *Gen.* v. 24. *Heb.* xi. 5. By "*running* the way of God's commandments," the Psalmist might mean to express his great earnestness and activity.—*at liberty.*] When Thou hast set me free from my anxieties and troubles—from every hindrance which now besets me, whether of sin or sorrow.

Nothing can put life into the downcast soul of man, except the Spirit of God: earthly remedies may give excitement, and answer for a time; but nothing can effectually heal a wounded spirit, or bind up a broken heart, but the all-sufficient grace of God. And in order to obtain this, we must be plain and open and unreserved in all our dealings with the Lord; who hates the disguise of the hypocrite: we must lay before Him in prayer our case of sin or sorrow, and "cast our burden upon" Him, in humble dependence upon His undeserved mercy, through Jesus Christ. And if our hearts be thus sincere; if we do hate the ways of sin and falsehood, and choose for our portion the ways of holiness and truth; if we do keep closely "to the law and the testimony," and "persevere in well-doing," the mighty and merciful God will set our heart at liberty from every earthly fetter, from every sinful habit, from every ungodly affection and desire; and then, and not till then, shall we be able or disposed to serve Him faithfully and truly. As long as we are in bondage to any known sin, we cannot do the will of Him, "whose service is perfect freedom." O Lord, "mercifully grant unto us such a measure of Thy grace, that we, running the way of Thy commandments, may obtain Thy gracious promises, and be made partakers of Thy heavenly treasure, through Jesus Christ our Lord." *Coll. 11th after Trin.*

QUESTIONS.

Cleaveth to the dust?—I have acknowledged my ways?—My

soul melteth?—The way of lying—the way of truth?—Why does God set them before us?—Mention some persons who chose the way of truth.—I have stuck, &c.?—Run the way?—When shall we do so?

THE TWENTY-FIFTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

FIFTH PORTION.

33 Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes: and I shall keep it unto the end.

34 Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law: yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.

35 Make me to go in the path of thy commandments: for therein is my desire.

36 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies: and not to covetousness.

37 O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity: and quicken thou me in thy way.

38 O stablish thy word in thy servant: that I may fear thee.

39 Take away the rebuke that I am afraid of: for thy judgements are good.

40 Behold, my delight is in thy commandments: O quicken me in thy righteousness.

Ver. 33. *I shall keep it*] What we learn of God, God will enable us, if we pray to Him, evermore to keep.

Ver. 35. *is my desire.*] "Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." *Matt.* v. 6.

Ver. 36. *not to coveteousness.*] Suffer not my heart to covet or desire any earthly gain. *Matt.* vi. 19, 20. *Col.* iii. 2. "The love of money is the root of all evil." 1 *Tim.* vi. 10.

Ver. 37. *lest they behold vanity:*] Lest, by beholding, I should be led to love and follow it.

Ver. 38. *stablish thy word.*] Make good Thy promises unto my soul.

Ver. 39. *the rebuke*] Take away the reproach which my enemies are ready to cast upon me; let it indeed appear, that I am Thy faithful servant.

"Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." *Luke* xi. 28. To hear and keep it not, will be a sad and dreadful reproach, will bring down the severest condemnation: "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." 2 *Pet.* ii. 21. But we are by nature weak and corrupt, and set against the holy word of God; and therefore we must pray, that He will "have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law;" that He will not suffer our eyes to be dazzled with any of the false appearances of earthly pleasure, nor our hearts ever to be led captive by the love of mammon. "The fashion of this world passeth away." 1 *Cor.* vii. 31. What folly, what madness, to prefer it to "the word of the Lord, which endureth for ever:" to prefer time to eternity, earth to heaven! Hear the Apostle's advice:—"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." 1 *John* ii. 15—17.

QUESTIONS.

Teach me, O Lord, the way, &c.—and what then?—Incline my heart—to what?—And not to covetousness?—What does the Apostle say of the love of money?—Turn away mine eyes—from what?—Take away the rebuke, &c.—Repeat the precept of St. John.

SIXTH PORTION.

41 Let thy loving mercy come also unto me, O Lord: even thy salvation, according unto thy word.

42 So shall I make answer unto my blasphemers: for my trust is in thy word.

43 O take not the word of thy truth utterly out of my mouth: for my hope is in thy judgements.

44 So shall I alway keep thy law: yea, for ever and ever.

45 And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy commandments.

46 I will speak of thy testimonies also, even before kings: and will not be ashamed.

47 And my delight shall be in thy commandments: which I have loved.

48 My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved: and my study shall be in thy statutes.

Ver. 41. *thy salvation, &c.*] The Psalmist, in affliction,

prays for deliverance, and pleads the promise of God on his behalf.

Ver. 42. *make answer*] My preservation will furnish an answer to them who accuse and reproach me; as it will prove that Thou art a God of mercy and power, and showest favour unto me.

Ver. 43. *take not, &c.*] Do not, by delaying to interfere, stop my mouth in appealing to Thy promises; leave me not to the danger of doubting Thy faithfulness; but give me reason to speak of Thy truth with holy courage.

Ver. 45. *I will walk, &c.*] I shall be able to serve Thee freely, without let or hindrance: see ver. 32.

Ver. 46. *before kings*:] *Acts* iv. 18, 19. *Mark* xiii. 9—11.

Ver. 48. *My hands, &c.*] To "lift up the hands" implies earnestness and encouragement in any business; thus David purposed to take courage and be very earnest in keeping God's commandments.

When we are imploring God's mercy, it is fit that we should plead the sure promises of God, as the hope of our acceptance with Him: and we should desire His favour, not only for our own benefit, but for the glory of His name; that our neighbours and friends, seeing how the Lord blesses us according to His word, may thereby be led to seek Him more earnestly, and put their trust in Him. Satan will set the evil world against us; but many even of the thoughtless and the wicked may be seriously impressed by beholding the power of religion in our character; by seeing how it renders us upright and happy, how it fills us with holy confidence and comfort, and raises us above the world. And let the world hate and frown and rage as it will, we must not fear it; we must not deny our faith; we must not conceal our religion; we must not be ashamed of "our fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." If I were brought to answer before an earthly king, I must remember, that I stand also before the King of kings, "whose I am, and whom I serve." If I were brought before an earthly judge, I must remember the more awful judgment of Him who hath said, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." *Mark* viii. 38. And then I could say with St. Paul, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for

it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." *Rom.* i. 16.

QUESTIONS.

So shall I make answer, &c.?—My blasphemies?—Explain ver. 43.—Walk at liberty?—What would he do before kings?—Show that we ought not to be ashamed.—My hands will I lift up?

SEVENTH PORTION.

49 O think upon thy servant, as concerning thy word: wherein thou hast caused me to put my trust.

50 The same is my comfort in my trouble: for thy word hath quickened me.

51 The proud have had me exceedingly in derision: yet have I not shrinked from thy law.

52 For I remembered thine everlasting judgements, O Lord: and received comfort.

53 I am horribly afraid: for the ungodly that forsake thy law.

54 Thy statutes have been my songs: in the house of my pilgrimage.

55 I have thought upon thy Name, O Lord, in the night-season: and have kept thy law.

56 This I had: because I kept thy commandments.

Ver. 49. *as concerning thy word:*] See on ver. 38. 41. —*to put my trust,*] Disappoint not the hope and expectation which Thou Thyself hast raised. We need not fear: if we hold fast the hope which God hath given us, we shall never be disappointed.

Ver. 50. *hath quickened*] Hath revived and refreshed me.

Ver. 51. *in derision:*] *Psalm* ii. 4.—*not shrinked*] Not drawn back.

Ver. 52. *thine everlasting judgements,*] Thy judgments of old, Thy dealings with the righteous in all ages: and Thou art always the same. *Psalm* lxxvii. 5. 11, 12.

Ver. 53. *horribly afraid:*] On account of the vengeance which is coming upon them.

Ver. 54. *in the house of my pilgrimage.*] While I am dwelling as a stranger on the earth, ver. 19. I sing of Thee by day, and think upon Thee by night, ver. 55. *Psalm* i. 2.

Ver. 56. *This I had:*] This comfort, ver. 52.

When the servant of God speaks of his comfort in trouble,

when he declares that he has passed many sweet and precious hours in the "house of mourning," the children of vanity will not believe him, and will laugh at him as if he were "beside himself:" but he has experienced the power of God in his heart, and only pities the ignorance and folly of ungodly men, and the judgment they are bringing down upon their heads. Their offences against him are as nothing in his sight, for they do him no harm; but he grieves for the guilt which lies heavy upon their own souls, and for the dishonouring of his God. Yet the time is but short for his enduring such evils; he is only a pilgrim and a stranger, and will soon be at home; he, therefore, "goes on his way rejoicing," and singing the praises of his God; and he is looking forward to the glorious day, when he shall "sing a new song" in the house of his heavenly Father, where there will be no disagreeing voice: "there the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest." *Job* iii. 17.

QUESTIONS.

As concerning Thy word?—Hath quickened me?—Derision?—Not shrinked?—Thine everlasting judgments?—Horribly afraid?—For whom, and why?—In the house of my pilgrimage?—I have thought upon Thy Name?—When?—And what was the fruit of this?

EIGHTH PORTION.

57 Thou art my portion, O Lord: I have promised to keep thy law.

58 I made my humble petition in thy presence with my whole heart: O be merciful unto me, according to thy word.

59 I called mine own ways to remembrance: and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

60 I made haste, and prolonged not the time: to keep thy commandments.

61 The congregations of the ungodly have robbed me: but I have not forgotten thy law.

62 At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee: because of thy righteous judgements.

63 I am a companion of all them that fear thee: and keep thy commandments.

64 The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy: O teach me thy statutes.

Ver. 57. *my portion,*] My possession, my treasure, my only good. It may allude to the portions of Canaan, which were divided to the Israelites by lot. *Josh.* xvii. 14; xviii. 10. The Levites had not one of these lots; the Lord was their inheritance or portion. *Josh.* xiii. 33. Thus *Psalm* xvi. 6. *Lam.* iii. 24.

Ver. 58. *in thy presence*] Rather, "*for* thy presence;" I entreated Thy favour. *Bib. Trans.*

Ver. 60. *prolonged not the time:*] Delayed not to turn from my error, as soon as I discovered it.

Ver. 61. *The congregations*] The companies.—*have not forgotten*] Though my serving of Thee has been attended with worldly loss, I have not on that account been less faithful, for Thou art my recompense. Thus *Heb.* x. 35.

Ver. 62. *at midnight, &c.*] As Paul and Silas did. *Acts* xvi. 25.

Happy the man who can sincerely say, "Thou art my portion, O Lord," I have considered and made my choice; from henceforth I renounce all things for the love of Thee; Thou art sufficient for me: Thee only I desire to enjoy, and therefore Thee only I desire to please: "I have promised to keep thy law." And in order that we may judge properly of our condition, and know whether the Lord is our portion or not, we must be continually "calling our own ways to remembrance," and see whether we are walking uprightly with our God; for none but those who do so walk, can possibly belong to Him. Every night, before we go to rest, we should examine narrowly into our conduct through the day, so that we may perceive, and so that we may immediately cast away every transgression, and repair every neglect. In this way the account will be kept clear; we shall know how we stand; we shall have the satisfaction of "proving our own selves" in the sight of the Lord. From this survey we shall derive peace and courage and confidence; we shall take our station "on the Lord's side;" we shall range ourselves boldly with His saints and servants, not caring for the frowns or persecution of the ungodly: for they who part with earth to gain heaven, and exchange the world for its Maker, certainly lose nothing by the bargain. *Phil.* iii. 8.

QUESTIONS.

Thou art my portion?—Petition in Thy presence?—Why should we call our ways to remembrance?—How often?—Prolonged not the time?—The congregations of the ungodly?—What had they done?—When would he rise and give thanks?—Of whom would he be a companion?—Of what is the earth full?

NINTH PORTION.

65 O Lord, thou hast dealt graciously with thy servant: according unto thy word.

66 O learn me true understanding and knowledge : for I have believed thy commandments.

67 Before I was troubled I went wrong : but now have I kept thy word.

68 Thou art good and gracious : O teach me thy statutes.

69 The proud have imagined a lie against me : but I will keep thy commandments with my whole heart.

70 Their heart is as fat as brawn : but my delight hath been in thy law.

71 It is good for me that I have been in trouble : that I may learn thy statutes.

72 The law of thy mouth is dearer unto me : than thousands of gold and silver.

Ver. 66. *I have believed thy commandments.*] To be the only true way to happiness.

Ver. 67.] We gather from this verse, that prosperity too often produces sin, *Deut.* viii. 10—14; and that trouble brings the cure, leading to repentance, and forgiveness, and reformation through the grace of God. *Deut.* iv. 30.

Ver. 68. *good and gracious :*] In sending affliction for the recovery of Thy people. *Heb.* xii. 5. 11.

Ver. 69. *have imagined*] Have invented and forged.

Ver. 70. *as fat as brawn :*] "Brawn" is here put for the fleshy part of a fat boar or pig. In the *Bible Version* it is, "*as fat as grease.*" The meaning is, "they grow fat with their plenty and feasting, in which they delight; and are thereby made unfeeling and insensible of Thy grace and mercy (*Psalm* xvii. 10; lxxiii. 7); but my delight is in serving Thee." Thus said our blessed Lord: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." *John* iv. 34.

Ver. 71. *that I may learn*] Ver. 67. *Psalm* xviii. 35. *Deut.* viii. 16.

Ver. 72. *of gold and silver.*] *Psalm* xix. 10. *Prov.* iii. 14.

True religion is best learned in the school of affliction, because by affliction the great hindrances to our learning it are removed; the pride of heart is brought down, the feelings of lust are blunted, and thus the conscience is left more at liberty to "have its perfect work," and show us the nature and effect of sin: grieving under our own weakness and trouble, we are more open to receive the grace of God and the power of His divine consolation. Plenty and pleasure, ease and self-indulgence, always corrupt the heart of man, and render it unfit for spiritual concerns: it is the

most frequent and fatal means employed by Satan, to make us forget God. In sickness and want, in fear and danger, in sorrow and distress, we begin to feel how weak and helpless we are, and how much we need assistance and strength from God. And blessed, beyond all measure blessed, is that affliction which brings us to ourselves, to a sense of our lost condition, to seek the Saviour with all our heart and soul; which shows us the vanities of time, and leads us to prepare for eternity. Whenever it pleases God to visit us with trouble, let us never fail to pray for His Holy Spirit to sanctify it to ourselves, and make it the fruitful means of grace and blessing. God is "good and gracious" in sending the trouble; and if we do not profit by it, the fault is our own. We have reason, indeed, to be thankful for that bodily sickness, which brings health to the soul; for that sorrow, which fills us with divine comfort; for those frowns of the world, which lead us to seek the favour and friendship of God; and for the poverty that makes us "rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love him." *James* ii. 5.

QUESTIONS.

What did David do before he was troubled?—What afterwards?—In what respect was God good and gracious to him?—Imagined a lie?—Explain ver. 70.—In what was it good to have been?—Why?—Than what was the law dearer?—What do we learn from this portion of the Psalm?

Evening Prayer.

TENTH PORTION.

73 Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: O give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.

74 They that fear thee will be glad when they see me: because I have put my trust in thy word.

75 I know, O Lord, that thy judgements are right: and that thou of very faithfulness hast caused me to be troubled.

76 O let thy merciful kindness be my comfort: according to thy word unto thy servant.

77 O let thy loving mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight.

78 Let the proud be confounded, for they go wickedly about to destroy me: but I will be occupied in thy commandments.

79 Let such as fear thee, and have known thy testimonies: be turned unto me.

80 O let my heart be sound in thy statutes: that I be not ashamed.

Ver. 73. *Thy hands, &c.*] Thou who gavest me my being, Thou the Creator of my body and soul, canst alone give me the power of learning Thy will.

Ver. 74. *will be glad*] It will be a joy and encouragement to them, when they see me protected and honoured, on account of my trust in Thy word.

Ver. 75. *of very faithfulness*] Bringing trouble upon me that I might be thus made fit to partake of Thy promised mercy; and that Thou mightest show Thy faithfulness and truth in preserving me.

Ver. 79. *be turned*] Let them turn to my side, and become my friends.

Ver. 80. *be sound*] Let my heart be sincere and stedfast in Thy word, without any deceit or wavering; let me love it all, and altogether.

We are here taught, that He who made man must ever be his best instructor; and though His judgments may sometimes be severe, yet, as they are always founded on truth, and righteousness, and love, they must ever be honoured by all who make the law of God their study. And the more we read and understand this holy law, and consider the Lord's dealings with us, the more we shall be convinced of His faithfulness and mercy to us and to all people. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 *Cor.* x. 13. Only let our "heart be sound in God's statutes;" only let us love His holy word truly and perfectly, so as to have respect to all His commandments, and we shall "never be confounded."

QUESTIONS.

Thy hands have—what?—O give me, &c.?—Why would the righteous be glad when they saw David?—Of very faithfulness?—Be turned unto me?—Let my heart be sound?—Who is man's best instructor?

ELEVENTH PORTION.

81 My soul hath longed for thy salvation: and I have a good hope because of thy word.

82 Mine eyes long sore for thy word: saying, O when wilt thou comfort me?

83 For I am become like a bottle in the smoke : yet do I not forget thy statutes.

84 How many are the days of thy servant : when wilt thou be avenged of them that persecute me ?

85 The proud have digged pits for me : which are not after thy law.

86 All thy commandments are true : they persecute me falsely; O be thou my help.

87 They had almost made an end of me upon earth : but I forsook not thy commandments.

88 O quicken me after thy loving-kindness : and so shall I keep the testimonies of thy mouth.

Ver. 82. *long sore for thy word :*] Are looking anxiously for the performance of Thy promise.

Ver. 83. *like a bottle in the smoke :*] Bottles, in those days, were made of skins, which were very apt to become dry and shrivelled by being hung up in their smoky tents. David means that his skin was withered, that his beauty and strength were wasted by sorrow and care; "his skin was dried up for want of fatness." *Psalm* cix. 23; xxxii. 3, 4.

Ver. 84. *How many are the days*] How long have I to live, that thou shouldest so delay? my days are not many: "when wilt thou execute judgement" (*Bib. Trans.*) on my persecutors?

Ver. 85. *which are not*] It may signify either that the "proud" or the "pits" were not after God's law, that is, were quite contrary to God's law. Thus *Psalm* v. 4, "Thou hast no pleasure in wickedness," means, "Thou hatest it;" and *Jer.* vii. 31, "I commanded them not," means, "I strictly forbade them." The "pits" here spoken of allude to the custom of ensnaring and taking animals. *Psalm* vii. 16; xxxv. 7.

Ver. 86. *falsely ;*] Deceitfully and wrongfully: "digging pits for me." Ver. 85.

Ver. 87. *upon earth :*] Had nearly removed me from earth to the other world.

Ver. 88. *O quicken me*] Preserve me still alive.—*after*] According to.

Day by day, whether in joy or grief, our souls must wait and long for the salvation of God; as the aged Simeon who "was

just and devout, waited for the consolation of Israel," for the coming of the Saviour, to give comfort and redemption to His people. And thus whenever it shall please Him to "make an end of us upon earth," we shall be able with Simeon to say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." *Luke* ii. 25. 29, 30. The soul of the faithful, sojourning with the body in the barren wilderness of life, is "athirst for God;" but though looking with longing eyes, it waits patiently, till the Lord sees fit to bring relief. "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." *Job* xiv. 14. And though our bodily frame be wasted with watching and praying, yet the soul will be daily renewed, and will be pluming her wings for her flight from this earthly tabernacle to her "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." 2 *Cor.* v. 1.

QUESTIONS.

My soul hath longed—for what?—Why had David a good hope?—Mine eyes long sore?—A bottle in the smoke?—Explain ver. 84.—Digged pits?—Which are not after Thy law?—Made an end of me upon earth?

TWELFTH PORTION.

89 O Lord, thy word : endureth for ever in heaven.

90 Thy truth also remaineth from one generation to another: thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and it abideth.

91 They continue this day according to thine ordinance : for all things serve thee.

92 If my delight had not been in thy law : I should have perished in my trouble.

93 I will never forget thy commandments : for with them thou hast quickened me.

94 I am thine, O save me : for I have sought thy commandments.

95 The ungodly laid wait for me to destroy me : but I will consider thy testimonies.

96 I see that all things come to an end : but thy commandment is exceeding broad.

Ver. 89, 90. *for ever in heaven—the foundation of the earth,*] Thy word and Thy truth stand firm, like the heavens and the earth. *Psalm* lxxxix. 2.

Ver. 91. *they continue*] The heavens and the earth continue, according to Thy appointment; and so is Thy promise sure. See *Jer.* xxxi. 35, 36.

Ver. 92. *I should have perished*] Not only was the word

of God a comfort in affliction, but it was necessary as the support of his life.

Ver. 94. *I am thine,*] This is the strongest plea for help that can be urged, "Lord, I am thine;" and they who can urge it truly, are sure of God's mercy.

Ver. 95. *laid wait*] Laid a snare.

Ver. 96. *come to an end: &c.*] Every earthly good is confined within a narrow limit, and comes to a speedy end; we soon see the best of it, and it is gone: but the truth and blessings of God's word have no limit and no end; they are as "broad" as the heavens; they can neither be measured nor searched; they spread through time to eternity.

Whilst we behold every thing around us failing and fading, decaying and dying, it is a wonderful comfort and support, it is a precious privilege and blessing, to have something more solid and sure and lasting than this world, to rest our hope upon. Every thing here below has the image of death stamped upon it; the face of nature is continually changing; trees, herbs, and flowers, lose their beauty and die; the animal race is daily perishing; our friends and neighbours are dropping into the grave, and we must shortly follow. And how short-lived are all the pleasures of earth; and even while they do continue, how unable are they to satisfy the desires of an immortal soul; how poor and disappointing: "For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it." *Isa.* xxviii. 20. Well it is for man, that a certain, and boundless, and everlasting treasure is opened to him in the word of God; well, that is, if he will seek it. Here is a deep mystery of love, which he can never fathom; the love of God in the salvation of man: here is a height of knowledge to which he can never climb; the knowledge of the most High God, "who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ." 2 *Cor.* v. 18. Here, in the word of God, is a fountain of joy and consolation, ever flowing, never exhausted: the Holy Spirit, "the well of water springing up into everlasting life." *John* iv. 14. None but the fool will seek to set up his rest on earth: Lord, make us "thine," that we may be wise, and rest in Thee for ever.

QUESTIONS.

For ever in heaven?—The foundation of the earth?—They continue—what?—According to Thine ordinance?—What plea

does David urge, that God may save him?—All things come to an end?—What is the commandment of God?—Describe how it is exceeding broad.

THIRTEENTH PORTION.

97 Lord, what love have I unto thy law: all the day long is my study in it.

98 Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.

99 I have more understanding than my teachers: for thy testimonies are my study.

100 I am wiser than the aged: because I kept thy commandments.

101 I have refrained my feet from every evil way: that I may keep thy word.

102 I have not shrunk from thy judgements: for thou teachest me.

103 O how sweet are thy words unto my throat: yea, sweeter than honey unto my mouth.

104 Through thy commandments I get understanding: therefore I hate all evil ways.

Ver. 97. *my study in it.*] So that I may keep it.

Ver. 98. *they*] Thy commandments—*are ever with me.*] Are continually present to guide me.

Ver. 99. *than my teachers:*] Than the Scribes or elders. From these three verses, 98—100, we learn, that the wisdom of God's words made David superior to the cunning policy of his "enemies," the learning of "teachers," and the experience of "the aged." *Prov.* ii. 7.

Ver. 101. *I have refrained*] I have "kept back" my feet from every evil way; I have kept myself from every evil habit.

Ver. 102. *not shrunk*] See ver. 51.

Ver. 103. *unto my throat:*] To my taste.—*sweeter*] See *Psalm* xix. 10.

Words cannot express the love which a pious mind entertains for the holy Scriptures: they are "the power of God unto salvation;" they tell us all that we know of the perfections of Jehovah, of our own lost condition as sinners, and of the way to happiness and glory, which is opened to all believers through the Lord Jesus Christ: they direct all our footsteps in that way, and support and comfort us as we are walking therein. Truly do they show us why we should love God, and why we should love

one another as the children of God; as members of the same family, redeemed by the same blood, heirs of the same eternal kingdom. And they who are thus brought to the love of God and the love of one another, find in the Bible a sweet delight, which it is impossible for them to describe. And they find it also their best and safest guide in all circumstances through life: so that while others, who in some things are their superiors, are troubled and perplexed, *their* way is plain and clear. On some portion of these Scriptures should our study be continually; each day should add something to our knowledge, our faith, and our virtue. "Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom." *James* iii. 13. If the Lord has indeed taught us, we are careful to "refrain our feet from every evil way;" that we may never depart from His judgments all the days of our life.

QUESTIONS.

For what had David love?—How did he show it?—What did God's work make him?—Than whom was he wiser?—Teachers?—Refrained?—From every evil way?—Not shrunk?—My throat?—Than what is God's word sweeter?

THE TWENTY-SIXTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

FOURTEENTH PORTION.

105 Thy word is a lantern unto my feet: and a light unto my paths.

106 I have sworn, and am stedfastly purposed: to keep thy righteous judgements.

107 I am troubled above measure: quicken me, O Lord, according to thy word.

108 Let the free-will offerings of my mouth please thee, O Lord: and teach me thy judgements.

109 My soul is alway in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law.

110 The ungodly have laid a snare for me: but yet I swerved not from thy commandments.

111 Thy testimonies have I claimed as mine heritage for ever: and why? they are the very joy of my heart.

112 I have applied my heart to fulfil thy statutes alway: even unto the end.

Ver. 105. *a lantern*] Serving as a lamp to guide me in a dark and dangerous world.

Ver. 106. *have sworn,*] Have solemnly promised and pledged myself: and this has every Christian done by his baptismal vow.

Ver. 108. *the free-will offerings of my mouth*] My prayers and praises, my holy resolutions and vows. *Psalm* l. 14.

Ver. 109. *My soul is alway in my hand:*] My life is ready to be lost, as if I held it in my hand, for any passenger to snatch it away. *Judg.* xii. 3. 1 *Sam.* xix. 5; xxv. 20; xxviii. 21. *Job* xiii. 14.

Ver. 110. *swerved not*] Turned not aside.

Ver. 111. *mine heritage*] My portion and possession.

Ver. 112. *I have applied*] It is the Spirit of God which inclines the heart to do good, *Phil.* ii. 13; but man is, nevertheless, properly said to apply his own heart, when he listens to the call, and obeys the motions, of God's grace. Thus he is said also to "purify himself," 1 *John* iii. 3, though it is God who "cleanseth us from all unrighteousness." 1 *John* i. 9.

Man is a traveller, his life is a journey, heaven is his end, his road lies through a wilderness, and he is in the dark. Thus circumstanced, how earnestly and devoutly ought he to pray, "O send out thy light and thy truth, that they may lead me, and bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy dwelling!" *Psalm* xliii. 3. For surely "the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life." *Prov.* vi. 23. The word of God discovers to us our errors; it shows us where we lost our way, and how we may find and recover it again. If we take this "lamp" in our hand, it will not only enable us to perceive the right course, but it will also direct us in every step, and guide our feet aright in the path of holiness and peace. So that, though we are in danger every moment of losing our lives; though a deadly disorder may suddenly fasten upon us, or an accident snap the thread of life; still we need not be anxious; our soul is safe in the Lord's hands; for "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 *Tim.* i. 12. Only let us "apply our heart" to the word of life, to keep our promise, and walk with God, and then we may sing His praises as we pass through every trouble, and we shall sing them for ever.

QUESTIONS.

Thy word is a lantern?—I have sworn?—The free-will offerings?—My soul is alway in my hand?—I swerved not?—As mine heritage?—What did he claim as such?—I have applied my heart?—How can we do this?

FIFTEENTH PORTION.

113 I hate them that imagine evil things: but thy law do I love.

114 Thou art my defence and shield: and my trust is in thy word.

115 Away from me, ye wicked: I will keep the commandments of my God.

116 O stablish me according to thy word, that I may live: and let me not be disappointed of my hope.

117 Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: yea, my delight shall be ever in thy statutes.

118 Thou hast trodden down all them that depart from thy statutes: for they imagine but deceit.

119 Thou puttest away all the ungodly of the earth like dross: therefore I love thy testimonies.

120 My flesh trembleth for fear of thee: and I am afraid of thy judgements.

Ver. 113. *I hate them*] I hate their ways, their evil imaginations. "I hate vain thoughts." *Bib. Trans.*

Ver. 114. *defence and shield:*] *Psalm* v. 13; xviii. 1.

Ver. 115. *Away from me,*] *Psalm* vi. 8.

Ver. 116. *stablish*] Uphold and preserve me.

Ver. 118. *deceit*] That by which they are themselves deceived: their plots of mischief are defeated, and come to nothing.

Ver. 119. *dross:*] The useless scum, which rises to the top of melted metals, and is thrown away. *Psalm* xii. 7; lxvi. 9. *Isa.* i. 22. 25. *Ezek.* xxii. 17—22.

Ver. 119, 120. *I love thy testimonies—my flesh trembleth*] Here are two great principles of a holy life; the love of God's law, and the fear of His judgments; the love of pleasing and the fear of offending Him.

They who truly love the Lord can want little persuasion or advice to keep from evil company; they hate all evil ways, yea, the very thoughts of evil; and therefore can take no pleasure in

sinful or foolish companions: the servant of God will not, in rude language, bid such to depart from him; but he will bid his own soul to have nothing to do with them: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men: avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." *Prov.* iv. 14, 15. In so doing, in refusing to take part with gay or wicked companions, we may, perhaps, be put to some trial, we may be ridiculed and reproached, possibly injured; but the Lord is our "defence and shield:" secure of His friendship, we need fear no man's frown; under His almighty protection, nothing can really harm us. Destruction is preparing for all who oppose or disregard Him; and it is set forth in Scripture by many striking figures: they will be driven away like chaff, they will be cast off like dross, they will be trodden under foot like the mire of the street. "The Lord shall judge his people: it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." *Heb.* x. 30, 31. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." *Heb.* iv. 1.

QUESTIONS.

I hate them?—What did he love?—Defence and shield?—stablish me?—They imagine but deceit?—Dross?—Mention some other figures of this kind?—What two great principles of a holy life are taught in ver. 119, 120?

SIXTEENTH PORTION.

121 I deal with the thing that is lawful and right: O give me not over unto mine oppressors.

122 Make thou thy servant to delight in that which is good: that the proud do me no wrong.

123 Mine eyes are wasted away with looking for thy health: and for the word of thy righteousness.

124 O deal with thy servant according unto thy loving mercy: and teach me thy statutes.

125 I am thy servant, O grant me understanding: that I may know thy testimonies.

126 It is time for thee, Lord, to lay to thine hand: for they have destroyed thy law.

127 For I love thy commandments: above gold and precious stone.

128 Therefore hold I straight all thy commandments: and all false ways I utterly abhor.

Ver. 122. *the proud*] My haughty foes. Enmity to God and His people commonly proceeds from pride and

self-conceit. So the righteous are called "the humble." *Psalm* xxxiv. 2.

Ver. 123. *for thy health:*] For the health (that is, the salvation,) which Thou wilt bring.—*for the word of thy righteousness.*] For the performance of Thy faithful promise.

Ver. 126. *to lay to thine hand:*] To lay Thine hand to the work, to bring down Thy proud enemies, and exalt Thy humble people.—*have destroyed thy law.*] Have destroyed its effects upon themselves and those around them; have done away with the duty which it requires, and made it void or of no effect.

Ver. 127. *above gold, &c.*] *Psalm* xix. 10.

Ver. 128. *hold I straight*] I hold all thy commandments to be right, and have no desire to twist or accommodate any of them to the crooked ways and wishes of the world.

Salvation, whether earthly or spiritual, whether of body or soul, may be delayed: the eyes of the sufferer may fail with looking upward; and his spirit may be ready to break forth in doubtful lamentations. But "wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens." *Lam.* iii. 39—41. Thus, when the Lord has sufficiently humbled us, and tried our faith and patience, He will send us His "saving health." "Though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." *Hab.* ii. 3; *Heb.* x. 37. And as the Lord will arise in due time for the deliverance of His people, so will He also arise and lay His hand of vengeance upon the sinner: He waits, but it is only for His own proper season. There is "a certain measure of iniquity," which when nations or individuals have filled up, the destroying angel is sent forth, and executes his dreadful commission. How ought a man to fear, lest the next sin he commits should fill up his measure, and seal his eternal doom! O let us "abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good." *Rom.* xii. 9. Let us "love the commandments," yea, all the commandments of our God; not pretending to hate some evil ways, and walking in others, but hating and avoiding all; thus we shall be able to stand in the day of trial, and approve our hearts to God.

QUESTIONS.

With what did David deal?—For what does he therefore pray?—The proud?—For thy health?—To lay to Thine hand?—Destroyed Thy law?—Above what did he love God's commandments?—Hold I straight, &c.?—And all false ways,—I do what?

SEVENTEENTH PORTION.

129 Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

130 When thy word goeth forth: it giveth light and understanding unto the simple.

131 I opened my mouth, and drew in my breath: for my delight was in thy commandments.

132 O look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me: as thou usest to do unto those that love thy Name.

133 Order my steps in thy word: and so shall no wickedness have dominion over me.

134 O deliver me from the wrongful dealings of men: and so shall I keep thy commandments.

135 Show the light of thy countenance upon thy servant: and teach me thy statutes.

136 Mine eyes gush out with water: because men keep not thy law.

Ver. 129. *are wonderful:*] For the knowledge which they give; for the mercy which they promise; for the support and comfort which they bestow: leading mankind, by a wonderful way, from earth to heaven, from grace to glory.

Ver. 130. *the simple.*] The humble and sincere, who are desirous of receiving and obeying Thy word. *Psalm* xix. 7.

Ver. 131. *drew in my breath:*] I panted: I eagerly desired the blessings of Thy word, as the panting deer, in the chase, opens its mouth, and draws in the refreshing breeze. *Psalm* xlii. 1.

Ver. 133. *have dominion*] *Psalm* xix. 13.

Ver. 135. *the light of thy countenance*] *Psalm* iv. 7.

Ver. 136. *Mine eyes*] David was so deeply concerned for God's honour, so well acquainted with the blessedness of keeping God's law, and so convinced of the misery of breaking it, that he wept over the wicked. Ver. 53.

The holy word of God is wonderful for what it teaches, and wonderful in its effects; it gives us all the true knowledge we can have of God and of man: it shows us what we were and what we are, and what we shall be; it shows us what God has done for us, and what He expects us to do for Him and for ourselves; it shows us the mercy and justice of the Lord, the joys of heaven and the pains of hell: and thus does it give wisdom to the simple, to the poorest and plainest who receive it aright; teaching them more in an hour than the wisest can learn all their lives long without it. To every considerate Christian it must be a source of deep concern and grief to see how many there are who pay no regard whatever to the word of life, and trample under foot the mercy of the eternal Son of God. If it be grievous to see men ruining their bodies, O how much more to see them ruining their souls! Thus Lot, among the Sodomites, was "vexed from day to day," not so much at their usage of himself, as at "seeing their unlawful deeds." 2 *Pet.* ii. 8. *Gen.* xix. Thus Jeremiah telleth the ungodly of his time, "If ye will not hear, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eyes shall weep sore and run down with tears." *Jer.* xiii. 17. And thus the holy Jesus was "grieved for the hardness of men's hearts," and "wept over" guilty Jerusalem. *Mark* iii. 5. *Luke* xix. 41. Accept, O Lord, the tears which our blessed Redeemer shed, in the days of His flesh, for us who should (but, alas! too often cannot) weep for our brethren or for ourselves, and give us at least the grace of holy mourning, which in Thy sight is of great price—"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

QUESTIONS.

What are God's testimonies?—When His word goeth forth,—what then?—Who are the simple?—And drew in my breath?—What does this describe?—Order my steps in Thy word,—for what end?—The light of Thy countenance?—Why did David shed tears?—Who else did so?—What should it lead us to do?

EIGHTEENTH PORTION.

137 Righteous art thou, O Lord: and true is thy judgement.

138 The testimonies that thou hast commanded: are exceeding righteous and true.

139 My zeal hath even consumed me: because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.

140 Thy word is tried to the uttermost: and thy servant loveth it.

141 I am small and of no

reputation : yet do I not forget thy commandments.

142 Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness : and thy law is the truth.

143 Trouble and heaviness have taken hold upon me : yet is my delight in thy commandments.

144 The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting : O grant me understanding, and I shall live.

Ver. 137. *true*] According to truth and justice.

Ver. 139. *My zeal*] My strong affection, my burning of heart (*Psalm* xxxix. 4), for Thy glory and the good of mankind, have wasted my spirits and my strength. See *Psalm* lxix. 9.

Ver. 140. *is tried to the uttermost* :] Is perfectly pure, like gold and silver tried and purified in the fire. *Psalm* xii. 7.

Ver. 141. *I am small*] Small in value.—*of no reputation* :] Of no esteem among men. *Phil.* ii. 7. See *Psalm* xxii. 6.

Ver. 142. *an everlasting righteousness* :] The rules and dealings of men may change: but the judgments of God are always founded on the same principles of justice, mercy, and truth; alike in all ages; unchangeable and eternal. It means the "righteousness" of God, as taught in His holy word. Ver. 144.

Ver. 144. *I shall live.*] So that the life of man, without the knowledge of God, is death. 1 *Tim.* v. 6. *Rev.* iii. 1.

"Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." *Rev.* xv. 3. In this holy song every saint will heartily join, humbly and thankfully acknowledging the justice and truth of his King: whatever be our circumstances or experience, all is right that God ordains; the dealings of His Providence and of His grace are all right, all perfectly free from the smallest portion of error. Whether we be numbered with the rich and great of this world, or whether we be poor and "of no reputation," we are equal in the sight of God. Though men may overlook and forget, yet God observes and remembers us: then let us not forget Him and His word; the less the world thinks of us, the more we need His friendship and favour; the greater our "trouble and heaviness" become, the more do we need the comfort of His

all-sufficient grace. 2 *Cor.* xii. 9. Without His grace, and without His law in our hearts, we are "dead while we live." "I am the Bread of life—the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." *John* vi. 35. 63. O that every one who "names the name of Christ," were able to say with the apostle, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me!" *Gal.* ii. 20. "This is the true God, and eternal life." 1 *John* v. 20.

QUESTIONS.

Repeat ver. 137.—My zeal, &c.?—Why?—Thy word is tried to the uttermost?—Small?—Of no reputation?—What is the righteousness of God?—How everlasting?—I shall live?—Quote some passages in which "life" is spoken of in the same manner.

Evening Prayer.

NINETEENTH PORTION.

145 I call with my whole heart: hear me, O Lord, I will keep thy statutes.

146 Yea, even unto thee do I call: help me, and I shall keep thy testimonies.

147 Early in the morning do I cry unto thee: for in thy word is my trust.

148 Mine eyes prevent the night-watches: that I might be occupied in thy words.

149 Hear my voice, O Lord, according unto thy loving-kindness: quicken me, according as thou art wont.

150 They draw nigh that of malice persecute me: and are far from thy law.

151 Be thou nigh at hand, O Lord: for all thy commandments are true.

152 As concerning thy testimonies, I have known long since: that thou hast grounded them for ever.

Ver. 145.] In this verse we have a key to success in prayer: to pray sincerely "with our whole heart," and with the stedfast purpose of keeping God's word.

Ver. 147. *Early in the morning*] The first thing in the morning, before the business of the day; before the day-light.

Ver. 148. *Mine eyes prevent*] My eyes are open before the watches of the night come round in their turn; or, it may mean, before the last watch comes, "the morning watch." *Psalm* cxxx. 6. I need not to be called and

warned; I am always awake at the desired time, and ready for my delightful study of Thy word. On the night-watches, see *Psalm* xc. 4.

Ver. 149. *according unto thy loving-kindness*:] Towards those who love Thy law. Ver. 132.

Ver. 151. *nigh at hand*,] Present to save them. *Isa.* lv. 6.

Ver. 152. *grounded them for ever*.] 1 *Pet.* i. 24, 25.

It is a certain sign that our hearts are set upon a work, when the thoughts of it cause sleep to depart from us; and we awake readily, constantly, and early, to the performance of it. David delighted in the holy exercises of prayer and meditation: therefore he was beforehand with the morning, with the light itself; he needed not the watchman's call, but was stirring before it could be given. And of David's Lord, as well as of David, we are told, that "in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." *Mark* i. 35. How do these examples condemn the cold indifference and idle neglect of many persons, who, in the midst of health and strength, sleep away half the hours of the morning; and when they do rise, forget the God who has preserved them through the night, and given them a new day; and think not of His word, and fall not down before Him! O my soul, be not thou thus unmindful, ungrateful, and unready! Awake, arise betimes; waste not so many precious hours; thy God calleth thee; lift up thy voice to Him; lift up thy affections; pour forth thy earnest and early desires for His grace and protection through the day, with a full resolution to keep His holy law. Thus will He be "nigh at hand" in every danger and every temptation; and thou wilt be safe beneath the shadow of His wing.

QUESTIONS.

When will our prayers be successful?—When in the day should we begin to pray?—Prevent the night-watches?—Why?—Be Thou nigh at hand?—What do we learn in this portion?—From whom may we learn the lesson?

TWENTIETH PORTION.

153 O consider mine adversity, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law.

154 Avenge thou my cause, and deliver me: quicken me, according to thy word.

155 Health is far from the ungodly : for they regard not thy statutes.

156 Great is thy mercy, O Lord : quicken me, as thou art wont.

157 Many there are that trouble me, and persecute me : yet do I not swerve from thy testimonies.

158 It grieveth me when I see the transgressors : because they keep not thy law.

159 Consider, O Lord, how I love thy commandments : O quicken me, according to thy loving-kindness.

160 Thy word is true from everlasting : all the judgements of thy righteousness endure for evermore.

Ver. 154. *Avenge*] "Plead thou my cause." *Bib. Trans. Psalm* xxxv. 1.—*quicken me,*] Three times do these words occur in this portion of the Psalm. So Christ came to quicken, or give life. *John* vi. 53. 57. 63.

Ver. 155. *Health*] Prosperity, salvation.

Ver. 157. *do I not swerve*] Do not decline or turn aside. Troubles and persecutions tempt men to fall away; they are the great trial of our faithfulness to God and His word. We must expect them, and be prepared to meet them. *Luke* xiv. 28—33. He who, under trials, forgets his own sufferings, to pity the sin and folly of his persecutors, is a true follower, as David was a forerunner, of Jesus Christ. *Luke* xix. 41, 42.

Ver. 158. *It grieveth me*] Ver. 53. 136.

Ver. 159, 160.] To "love God's commandments," and to trust in His "word as true," form the sure foundation of the hope of the righteous.

God is the defender of His people, to "plead their cause;" their Redeemer, to "deliver" them out of troubles; the author and fountain of their life, to "quicken" and support them. We may therefore have recourse to Him at all times, as an Advocate, a Saviour, and a Comforter: for the defence of our cause; for the deliverance of our persons; and for the consolation of our hearts. And all this "according to his word," in which He has engaged thus to defend, and rescue, and strengthen, those who trust in Him and apply to Him. But let us remember, that we must be faithful to God, and keep close to the line of our duty, if we expect His divine blessing and protection. God will not afford His favour and support to the disobedient or the negligent: and if, "in time of temptation we fall away," the Lord will not remain with us, but leave us to our sin and

folly. Blessed are they who love His law, and build upon His truth: "The Lord is good to them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." *Lam.* iii. 26.

QUESTIONS.

Avenge Thou my cause?—Name the words which are thrice repeated.—What is the meaning of them?—Health?—From whom is it far?—Why?—Not swerve?—From what?—When was he grieved?—How has he expressed this before?

TWENTY-FIRST PORTION.

161 Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

162 I am as glad of thy word: as one that findeth great spoils.

163 As for lies, I hate and abhor them: but thy law do I love.

164 Seven times a day do I praise thee: because of thy righteous judgements.

165 Great is the peace that they have who love thy law: and they are not offended at it.

166 Lord, I have looked for thy saving health: and done after thy commandments.

167 My soul hath kept thy testimonies: and loved them exceedingly.

168 I have kept thy commandments and testimonies: for all my ways are before thee.

Ver. 161. *Princes, &c.*] David was persecuted by Saul and his wicked companions without any cause. 1 *Sam.* xviii. xxvi. But the word of God was still his rule; nor would he do any thing against it, even though he might thereby gain advantage over his enemies. Thus he spared Saul's life, when he might have taken it. 1 *Sam.* xxiv.

Ver. 162. *great spoils.*] As the finding of great treasures, in the possession of an enemy, is the joy of a prince and conqueror, so does my joy consist in the treasures of Thy word.—*spoils.*] *Psalm* xxxv. 10; lxviii. 12.

Ver. 164. *Seven times*] Many times. See *Psalm* xii. 7; lxxix. 13.

Ver. 165. *not offended at it.*] Not offended at any thing it requires from them; no duty, no self-denial, no sacrifice proves a stumbling-block in their way, gives them uneasiness, or does them any harm. *Psalm* xci. 12. 1 *John* ii. 10.

Ver. 166. *thy saving health:*] Thy salvation.

Ver. 168. *are before thee*] Are perfectly known to Thee. *Heb.* iv. 13.

Religion is not a matter to be taken up now and then, on great and serious occasions; on a day of calamity, on a day of sickness, or on the Lord's day: it is for every day, and all the day long. As we are doing the business of our common calling, we may be walking with God, in the spirit of holy obedience to His will; "whatsoever we do, doing all to the glory of God." 1 *Cor.* x. 31. The work of prayer and praise need not, ought not, to be confined to our morning and evening devotions:—many times a day, times without number, should the heart be lifted up to heaven, in prayer for help, in thankfulness for mercies, in spiritual meditation, in holy communion with our God. Thus would all our labours be lightened, and our souls be continually refreshed and strengthened: we should find "great peace;" a perfect calm in the bosom, amid the storms and tempests of life. We should have peace with God by the blood of reconciliation; peace with ourselves, by the answer of a good conscience, and "joy in the Holy Ghost;" peace with all men, by the spirit of charity. All that we can understand of God's dealings with us, we shall perceive to be right; and all that we understand not, we may leave contentedly and peacefully to His wisdom and mercy, according to His word, "looking for his saving health," and "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 *Cor.* i. 7—9.

QUESTIONS.

Who persecuted, &c.?—As glad of Thy word, as who?—What are great spoils?—Seven times?—What brings peace?—They are not offended at it?—Saving health?—Ways before Thee?

TWENTY-SECOND PORTION.

169 Let my complaint come before thee, O Lord: give me understanding, according to thy word.

170 Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me, according to thy word.

171 My lips shall speak of thy praise: when thou hast taught me thy statutes.

172 Yea, my tongue shall sing of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteous.

173 Let thine hand help me: for I have chosen thy commandments.

174 I have longed for thy saving health, O Lord: and in thy law is my delight.

175 O let my soul live, and

it shall praise thee : and thy judgements shall help me.
176 I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost : O seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments.

Ver. 169. *my complaint*] Here, as in many other verses, "complaint" does not mean murmuring; it means only the expression of want, the statement of affliction: in the *Bible Version* it is, "Let my *cry* come," &c.

Ver. 170. *my supplication*] My prayer.

Ver. 174. *thy saving health,*] Ver. 166.

Ver. 175. *let my soul live, &c.*] Let me live. *Psalm* cxvi. 2. 9.

Ver. 176. *gone astray like a sheep*] David may allude either to his being forced to wander about, from place to place, without home or friend, like a lost sheep; or to his sinful wanderings from the fold of the heavenly Shepherd (*Psalm* xxiii. 1), to his former transgressions: perhaps both these senses may be intended.

Few of us have been tried as David was; few have been driven from house and home, for the sake of our religion, by the enemies of our God. In former days many of our fellow Christians were so driven by the sword of persecution, to seek their shelter in a foreign land, where they wandered as sheep that were lost: but our lot is more favoured; we can serve our God in quiet and peace; and thankful should we be for this blessing. Yet all of us have wandered, in another sense, have gone grievously astray from the holy law of God, (*Isa.* liii. 6,) and great reason have we to join, with humble and penitent hearts, in the scriptural Confession of our Church Service, 'Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep.' And when we do thus pour forth our "complaint before him," and "long for his saving health," He will "hear our cry," will pity, and pardon, and help us, and bring us back to His fold again; yea, He will rejoice, with His holy angels, at our return, even as the shepherd, when he findeth his lost sheep in the wilderness, "layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing, and calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost." *Luke* xv. 3—7. O that the words of the Apostle may be truly applied to every one of us, "Ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls!" 1 *Pet.* ii. 25.

QUESTIONS.

My complaint?—Supplication?—Thy saving health?—Let my soul live, what then?—Gone astray like a sheep?—Who is our shepherd?—How may we return to the fold?—What is meant by the fold?

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM CXX.

The Psalmist, probably David, who had been delivered from his slandering enemies, prays for God's continued mercy, and laments that he was obliged to live among such people.

1 When I was in trouble I called upon the Lord : and he heard me.

2 Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips : and from a deceitful tongue.

3 What reward shall be given or done unto thee, thou false tongue : even mighty and sharp arrows, with hot burning coals.

4 Wo is me, that I am constrained to dwell with Mesech : and to have my habitation among the tents of Kedar.

5 My soul hath long dwelt among them : that are enemies unto peace.

6 I labour for peace, but when I speak unto them thereof : they make them ready to battle.

Ver. 1. *in trouble*] From the malice and treachery of my enemies.

Ver. 3. *What reward*] Thou art expecting to gain some advantage by thy falsehood; but, instead, thou art bringing upon thyself punishment from God, here represented by the common figures of arrows and coals. *Psalm* xi. 7; xviii. 13, 14; cxliv. 6.—*thou false tongue :*] Thou man of false tongue. *Psalm* lii. 5.

Ver. 4. *constrained*] Compelled.—*with Mesech—Kedar.*] These names denote a wild and fierce people, dwelling in tents. It is not meant that the Psalmist was really living among these people, but among those who were like

them for fierceness and barbarity. Mesech was the son of Japheth, *Gen.* x. 2. Kedar the son of Ishmael, *Gen.* xxv. 13.

Ver. 5, 6.] If this was the case of David, much more might the Son of David make the same complaint; that He, the great peace-maker, and the "Prince of Peace," (*Isa.* ix. 6. *Eph.* ii. 14—17,) dwelt among the enemies of peace.

When we remember that both David and Jesus were surrounded with enemies and slanderers, "with lying lips and deceitful tongues," we must not wonder if we are sometimes treated in like manner: the world is what it always was, an enemy to God and His people, because an enemy to holiness and good: and in truth, the holier and better we are, and the more worthily and closely we are walking with God, so much the more may we expect to be hated and opposed by the wicked. But the day of the wicked is short; their lies and reproaches, and our endurings, will soon be at an end; both the one and the other are noted down in God's book, and each will receive its proper reward. In the mean time we must pray for grace to stand firm; and "consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." *Heb.* xii. 3. We shall not seek the favour, we shall not court the friendship of those, who would wage war with the Son of God Himself, if He were now upon earth. But let us "possess our souls in patience," and "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." *Heb.* xii. 14. Continually striving to "overcome evil with good." And thus, after dwelling a little longer amid the tents of unquietness and ungodliness, we shall be at length removed to a "peaceable habitation," to an habitation of holiness and glory, in the kingdom of heaven.

QUESTIONS.

What did the Psalmist do when in trouble?—And what was the consequence?—Thou false tongue?—What reward?—Sharp arrows, burning coals?—What do they signify?—Constrained?—Mesech—Kedar?—Whom does he mean?—With whom had his soul long dwelt?—Who was like him in this respect?

PSALM CXXI.

This Psalm, like the xcist, *contains an assurance of God's protection of the righteous, and was probably written by David concerning the Messiah.*

1 I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills : from whence cometh my help.
2 My help cometh even from the Lord : who hath made heaven and earth.
3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved : and he that keepeth thee will not sleep.
4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel : shall neither slumber nor sleep.
5 The Lord himself is thy keeper : the Lord is thy defence upon thy right hand;
6 So that the sun shall not burn thee by day : neither the moon by night.
7 The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil : yea, it is even he that shall keep thy soul.
8 The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in : from this time forth for evermore.

Ver. 1. *I will lift, &c.*] The first two verses may describe a pious Israelite on his way to worship at Jerusalem, or worshipping toward Jerusalem, when in a distant land, (1 *Kings* viii. 42—44. *Dan.* vi. 10,) or they may describe the resolution and confidence of David, when going forth to war.

Ver. 3. *thy foot to be moved :*] The Lord will cause thee, O righteous man, to stand firm; no enemy shall supplant or remove thee. This verse, to the end, may be considered either as an address of David to the pious Israelite (ver. 1), or as addressed by the high priest to David, from the holy place.

Ver. 5. *thy right hand ;*] *Psalm* cix. 30 ; cx. 5.

Ver. 6. *neither the moon by night.*] Neither shalt thou be injured by the keen cold air of the moonlight night: it means, Thou shalt be altogether protected and preserved, by day and by night: and it alludes to the Divine protection afforded to Israel, by the pillar of a cloud by day, affording a refreshing shadow; and by the pillar of fire by night, warming and enlightening. *Numb.* ix. 15—23.

Ver. 7. *from all evil :*] Either He shall turn it aside, or turn it to thy advantage.

Ver. 8. *thy going out, &c.*] God shall bless thee in all that thou undertakest and doest, (*Deut.* xxviii. 2—6,) in thy goings forth to labour, and in thy comings in to rest, abroad and at home.

In all our hardships and troubles, all our difficulties and dangers, we must "lift up our eyes" to the everlasting hills of the heavenly Sion, where is the throne of mercy, and from whence alone cometh all our help. Jesus the Messiah, who was protected upon earth by Divine providence and power, until His "time was fully come;" and who after death was raised again, and ascended into the heavens, now watches for the defence and preservation of His Church, and every member thereof. The poorest and weakest, who put their trust in Him, are as much the objects of His merciful care, as the richest and mightiest upon earth; and if they be unknown or despised by the world, they need not regard it, for the Maker and Ruler of the world, who is their guardian and their friend, will 'keep from them all hurtful things, and give them all things profitable to their salvation.' He will keep their lives, as long as it is good for them to be kept here; and after a few more goings out and a few more comings in, a few more changes of labour and rest, of night and day, He will "make them pillars in the temple of God, and they shall go no more out;" and "there shall be no night there," and "no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof:" "they shall rest from all their labours, and their works do follow them." *Rev.* iii. 12; xxi. 23—25; xiv. 13.

QUESTIONS.

I will lift up mine eyes—to what place?—What hill?—Whither should we lift our eyes?—Why?—Thy foot to be moved?—Upon thy right hand?—Explain ver. 6.—Thy going out and thy coming in?

PSALM CXXII.

The joy of going up with the people to Jerusalem, to worship God and keep a holy feast.

1 I was glad when they said unto me: We will go into the house of the Lord.

2 Our feet shall stand in thy gates: O Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem is built as

a city : that is at unity in itself.

4 For thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord : to testify unto Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.

5 For there is the seat of judgement : even the seat of the house of David.

6 O pray for the peace of Jerusalem : they shall prosper that love thee.

7 Peace be within thy walls : and plenteousness within thy palaces.

8 For my brethren and companions' sakes : I will wish thee prosperity.

9 Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God : I will seek to do thee good.

Ver. 3. *that is at unity in itself.*] Unity means *oneness ;* the buildings of the city were all in such regular order as to be *one* in appearance ; and they were to be considered as a sign, or emblem, of the agreement and union of God's people with one another. *Eph.* ii. 19—22 ; iv. 1—6.

Ver. 4. *the tribes go up,*] As the tribes of Israel did at the three great feasts. *Exod.* xxiii. 14—17.—*to testify unto Israel,*] To set before the people the wonderful goodness of the Lord toward them, and to remind them of it.

Ver. 5. *the seat of judgement :*] The throne of government and law.

Ver. 8, 9.] Here David gives two reasons for his great desire of the prosperity of Jerusalem,—the good of his people, and the glory of his God.

Great was the joy of an Israelite, when his brethren called upon him to accompany them, at some feast, to the temple at Jerusalem ; and great is the joy of every true Christian, when he is invited, in like manner, to celebrate the feasts of the Church : the birth, the resurrection, the ascension of his Lord. And great cause, indeed, have we in this country to be thankful that the house of God is brought so near to us : the Israelites had to perform long and wearisome journeys to join in their feasts ; and most of them saw their temple only three times in a year. We are always within reach of the temple of the Lord, and may offer our spiritual sacrifice of prayer and praise every Lord's day ; and continually feast, at the Lord's table, upon His righteous sacrifice. O that we may value such favours and blessings ! Let us pray that we may ! Let us pray that the fruit of our great privileges may appear in our lives ; that we may "live as brethren," and thus uphold and do honour to our Sion ; to that beloved Church, which is the common

parent of so many benefits to us, her adopted and redeemed children! Without peace, the Church cannot prosper: God will not love or protect her, but will leave her to her enemies, the children of contention and hatred. Let us pray and labour every day for the peace of the Church, and every member of it: let us beseech Almighty God 'to inspire continually the universal Church with a spirit of truth, unity, and concord; to grant that all they that do confess His holy name, may agree in the truth of His holy word, and live in unity and godly love.' And let us ourselves be careful, "if it be possible, as much as lieth in us, to live peaceably with all men." *Rom.* xii. 18.

QUESTIONS.

What is the subject of this Psalm?—I was glad—when?—At unity in itself?—The tribes go up?—On what occasions?—For what purposes?—The seat of judgment?—For what should we pray?—For what reasons did David desire the prosperity of Jerusalem?

PSALM CXXIII.

An expression of trust in God, and prayer for deliverance from proud and oppressing foes.

1 Unto thee lift I up mine eyes: O thou that dwellest in the heavens.

2 Behold, even as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress: even so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until he have mercy upon us.

3 Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us: for we are utterly despised.

4 Our soul is filled with the scornful reproof of the wealthy: and with the despitefulness of the proud.

Ver. 2. *until he have mercy*] *Psalm* xxvii. 16. *Isa.* xxv. 9.

Ver. 4. *the despitefulness*] The contempt and persecution. *Matt.* v. 44.

The servants of God, like other servants, if they are injured, and suffer violence, may expect help and protection from the Master, 'whose cause they are faithfully serving.' Let them not harbour any spirit of malice or revenge; let them but leave their

cause with God and trust in His mercy, and He will afford them redress in His good time and way. But they must not expect to fare better than their Master did; the world which hated Him, will hate them; they will find a cross in their way; and they must "take it up and follow him." They will have strength to bear it, as He had; and they will find it to be their glory, as it was His. The Lord will "have mercy upon them" here in this world; but especially will it be manifested on the latter day, when the proud shall be humbled, and the sensual shall be tormented; when patient poverty shall inherit everlasting riches, and oppressed humility shall be exalted to a throne above the stars. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." *Matt.* v. 10.

QUESTIONS.

Unto whom did the Psalmist lift up his eyes?—For what purpose?—To what does he compare his waiting upon God?—What petition is twice repeated in this Psalm?—With what was their soul filled?—The despitefulness?

PSALM CXXIV.

The Church describes her troubles, and gives the glory of her salvation to the Lord.

1 If the Lord himself had not been on our side, now may Israel say: if the Lord himself had not been on our side, when men rose up against us;

2 They had swallowed us up quick: when they were so wrathfully displeased at us.

3 Yea, the waters had drowned us: and the stream had gone over our soul.

4 The deep waters of the proud: had gone even over our soul.

5 But praised be the Lord: who hath not given us over for a prey unto their teeth.

6 Our soul is escaped even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler: the snare is broken and we are delivered.

7 Our help standeth in the name of the Lord: who hath made heaven and earth.

Ver. 2. *quick:*] They would have swallowed us up *alive.* See *Psalm* lv. 16.

Ver. 3. *the waters*] *Psalm* xviii. 16; xl. 2.

Ver. 5. *a prey unto their teeth.*] As lambs into the mouth of the wolf or the lion.

Ver. 6. *the snare is broken*] When we seemed to be

taken, like a bird in the snare, and they were going to lay hold upon us, and thought to destroy us, their plot failed, at that instant, and we were set free from their power. So was Christ delivered, when the Jews thought themselves sure of His utter destruction.

The preservation of David and his people is here described by four very suitable figures: it is compared, 1. To the rescue of men from sudden destruction, when the earth had opened to swallow them up. 2. To a narrow escape from drowning, when all was given up for lost. 3. To the snatching of a poor lamb from the jaws of a ravenous wolf. 4. To the deliverance of a bird from the fowler's grasp, by the snare unexpectedly breaking. In all these cases liberty and life are represented as being obtained, not by the power of the creature set free, but by means of some unlooked-for help. Thus are the righteous redeemed and saved from all their troubles by the wonder-working power of God: His providence ordains the means of their safety; and His grace comforts them under every trial. But He frequently leaves them for a time in the greatest danger, in order that they may become thoroughly sensible of their own weakness, and their need of His help. "Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God. Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel." *Jer.* iii. 22, 23.

QUESTIONS.

What might Israel say?—Quick?—When would they have swallowed them up?—State the four different figures by which David here describes the deliverance of the righteous.—A prey unto their teeth?—In what does our help stand?

PSALM CXXV.

God protects those who trust in Him, but He will forsake and punish every unfaithful servant who falls away.

1 They that put their trust in the Lord shall be even as the mount Sion: which may not be removed, but standeth fast for ever.

2 The hills stand about Jerusalem: even so standeth the Lord round about his people, from this time forth for evermore.

3 For the rod of the ungodly cometh not into the lot of the righteous : lest the righteous put their hand unto wickedness.

4 Do well, O Lord : unto those that are good and true of heart.

5 As for such as turn back unto their own wickedness : the Lord shall lead them forth with the evil-doers ; but peace shall be upon Israel.

Ver. 3. *the rod*] The sceptre, the power. Thus *Psalm* ii. 9 ; xxiii. 4 ; cx. 2.—*cometh not*] Comes not, so as to remain.—*into the lot*] Into the inheritance. *Josh.* xviii. 10. The meaning is, the power of the ungodly is not suffered to be fully exercised over the righteous ; lest by their continual vexations, the righteous be tempted to fall, or to use some unworthy means for their redress.

Ver. 4. *that are good and true of heart.*] That continue faithful under all their trials.

Ver. 5. *such as turn back, &c.*] Thus *Ezek.* xviii. 24—26. *Heb.* x. 38, 39.

The love of God for His people can never fail ; His mercy and power are alway ready to be manifested for their protection. He is 'more ready to hear than we to pray, and wont to give more than either we desire or deserve :' but we must bear the true character of His people, and fulfil the conditions of His covenant ; otherwise we have no ground on which we may expect His favour : they will be defended, who "put their trust in the Lord" without doubt or complaining ; to them He will "do well," who are good and true of heart, who love Him sincerely, and cleave to Him stedfastly, whatever may befal them. All those who thus confide in Him, and pray to Him, will be effectually preserved from the power of the enemy : tempted they will be, afflicted they may be, but not beyond what they are able to bear : "as their days, so shall their strength be." But they who, like Demas, forsake the good way, "having loved this present world," (2 *Tim.* iv. 10,) must not look for the continuance of God's protection. They who "turn back to their own wickedness," must be numbered with wicked doers : "they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame ;" "they do despite unto the Spirit of grace." *Heb.* vi. 6 ; x. 29. The "latter end is worse with them than the beginning : for it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the commandment delivered." 2 *Pet.* ii. 20—22.

Ebening Prayer.

PSALM CXXVI.

The song of a Jew, just delivered from captivity in Babylon, and praying with faith unto the Lord to complete His blessed purpose.

1 When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion : then were we like unto them that dream.

2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter : and our tongue with joy.

3 Then said they among the heathen : The Lord hath done great things for them.

4 Yea, the Lord hath done great things for us already : whereof we rejoice.

5 Turn our captivity, O Lord : as the rivers in the south.

6 They that sow in tears : shall reap in joy.

7 He that now goeth on his way weeping, and beareth forth good seed : shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him.

Ver. 1. *of Sion :*] Of the Jewish people.—*like unto them that dream.*] That Cyrus should issue a decree for the Jews to return to their own country, and to rebuild their city and temple ; that he should dismiss such a number of captives, not only " without money and without price," but even laden with presents, (*Ezra* i. 1—6,) this was the work of the Lord, who had foretold it by the mouth of His prophet. *Isa.* xliv. 28. And it was such a joyful and sudden change, so strange and unexpected at the time, that it seemed like a dream ; they could scarcely believe it to be true.—And this deliverance, like that from Egypt, is an emblem of our spiritual redemption from sin and death by Jesus Christ.

Ver. 3. *they among the heathen :*] Even the very heathen were led to confess that the Lord had done great things for His people. *Nehem.* vi. 16.

Ver. 5. *Turn our captivity,*] Complete, O Lord, the work which Thou hast begun ; turn our captive people to their own land.—*as the rivers in the south.*] Just as the streams in the Southern Desert, which are empty in the dry season, are afterwards filled again for the refreshment of the thirsty land, so let our nation return to refresh and

restore their own deserted land and city. See *Jer.* xxx. xxxi.

Ver. 6. *that sow in tears: &c.*] The return of the Jews from Babylon to Judea (a distance of many hundred miles) would be attended with great trouble and fatigue; and a sad prospect lay before them after their return, for their city, and temple, and country were all in ruins: but still their labour would be little, when compared with their future joy; even as a little seed sown produces a plentiful crop, and abundant sheaves of corn. The same gracious promise extends to all the sorrows of every sincere Christian. *Isa.* xii. 1—3. *John* xvi. 22, 23.

Here, O disciple of Jesus, even in this history of the Jews, behold an emblem of thy present labour, and thy future reward! Thou sowest, perhaps, in tears; thou doest thy duty amidst persecution and affliction, sickness, pain, and sorrow; thou labourest in the Church, and no account is made of thy labours; no profit seems likely to arise from them. Nay, thou must thyself drop into the dust of death, and all the storms of that winter must pass over thee, until thy form shall be perished, and thou shalt see corruption. Yet the day is coming when thou shalt reap in joy; and plentiful shall be thy harvest. For thus thy blessed Master went forth weeping, a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," bearing precious seed, and sowing it around Him, till at length His own body was buried, like a grain of wheat, in the furrow of the grave. But He arose, and is now in heaven; from whence He shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, "bringing his sheaves with him." Then shall every man receive the fruit of his works, and have praise of God.

QUESTIONS.

What is the subject of this Psalm?—The captivity of Sion?—What were they like?—How like them that dream?—What did the heathen say?—Turn our captivity?—As the rivers in the south?—Explain ver. 6, 7.—Of what was this deliverance a sign or emblem?

PSALM CXXVII.

The necessity of dependance upon God, and His blessing, in all that we desire, and undertake, and do.

1 Except the Lord build the house : their labour is but lost that build it.

2 Except the Lord keep the city : the watchman waketh but in vain.

3 It is but lost labour that ye haste to rise up early, and so late take rest, and eat the bread of carefulness : for so he giveth his beloved sleep.

4 Lo, children and the fruit of the womb : are an heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord.

5 Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant : even so are the young children.

6 Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them : they shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate.

Ver. 1. *build the house :*] Help and bless the building.

Ver. 3. *lost labour, &c.*] It is in vain that ye take so much thought and pains, without looking to God for help; without His help, no care or labour can be successful; and, with His help, less pains would be sufficient.—*for so he giveth, &c.*] He gives to His beloved people a time for sleep as well as a time for labour; and so, "casting their burden upon the Lord," they take their rest, and yet prosper.

Ver. 4. *Lo, children, &c.*] This, like every other desired blessing, is to be considered as a gift from the Lord.

Ver. 5. *Like as the arrows, &c.*] Dutiful children serve as means of defence to their parents, like arrows in the hands of a mighty warrior. The Psalmist wrote in a time when there was much contention and warfare.

Ver. 6. *his quiver full of them :*] Full of such arrows: happy the man, in such times of violence, who had many children to defend him. The "quiver" is a small case, or box, into which arrows are put.—*in the gate.*] The court of law and judgment was held in the gate of the city: and some think it means, that the children would be ready to stand up and maintain the character of their parents, in case of a lawsuit or trial. But it may mean, that they need not be afraid, even at the very worst, when their enemies are at the gate of the city, and threatening to enter. *Gen.* xxii. 17; xxiv. 60. These latter verses have caused this Psalm to be introduced into the Thanksgiving Service of women after child-birth.

In every undertaking, the blessing of God must accompany

the labours of man to make them prosper; no work can bring real good without Him, and no design can miscarry under His favour and protection. Our own proper care and labour are necessary; these are the means which God commands us to use, but the means are nothing without His blessing. We must be "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." *Rom.* xii. 11. Having done our best, in the way of our calling, we must leave the matter with God, and not be over-anxious. Such is the meaning of our Lord's precept, "Take no thought for the morrow." *Matt.* vi. 34. Do your duty, and trust in God, "casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." 1 *Pet.* v. 7. How many children of this world are overcharged with business and care, depriving themselves of their needful rest: and all to no good purpose! Far less labour might have answered better, with diligent prayer to the Lord, and a humble reliance upon His blessing. In thy daily walk of life, in all thy concerns, and all thy employments, "commit thy way unto the Lord, and put thy trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass." *Psalm* xxxvii. 5.

QUESTIONS.

Build the house?—When is the labour lost?—When does the watchman wake in vain?—Explain ver. 3.—What are children like?—How like arrows?—Quiver, full of what?—What does this mean?—In the gate?—What do we learn from this Psalm?—On what occasion is it used?

PSALM CXXVIII.

On the blessings which are poured upon the head of the righteous.

1 Blessed are all they that fear the Lord: and walk in his ways.

2 For thou shalt eat the labours of thine hands: O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be.

3 Thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine: upon the walls of thine house.

4 Thy children like the olive-branches: round about thy table.

5 Lo, thus shall the man be blessed: that feareth the Lord.

6 The Lord from out of Sion shall so bless thee: that thou shalt see Jerusalem in prosperity all thy life long.

7 Yea, that thou shalt see thy children's children: and peace upon Israel.

Ver. 2. *For thou, &c.*] Thou, whoever thou art, that

fearest the Lord, &c.—*the labours of thine hands:*] The fruit of thy labour. *Isa.* lxv. 22.—*well is thee,*] Well art thou.

Ver. 4.] Thy children round thy table shall be flourishing like the branches of the olive-tree.

Ver. 6. *Jerusalem in prosperity*] Every true believer must rejoice greatly in the prosperity of the Church; because a blessing upon the Church spreads itself to all the members thereof: and the welfare of our brethren is the best and purest source of earthly joy. 3 *John*, ver. 2—4. The promises in this Psalm render it appropriate for the Marriage Service of the Church, in which it is used.

Worldly blessings and comfort are not the only, nor the chief, reward of faith and piety, but they are most commonly one of its rewards. Seek ye "first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." *Matt.* vi. 33. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 *Tim.* iv. 8. Often, indeed, worldly comforts are denied or taken away; but it is only that more valuable blessings may be increased and secured—the blessing and consolation of God's grace, and the riches of His heavenly kingdom. *Matt.* xix. 29. If the righteous man is favoured with temporal possessions or joys, he accepts them as the shadows of those which are eternal; if they are denied, he remembers that they are but shadows, and are therefore denied, that he may fix his thoughts and affections more firmly upon the enduring and everlasting substance in heaven. Jehovah, having blessed us in His Church upon earth, will bless us with the vision of His immortal glory: we shall see the glory of the New Jerusalem—the wealth, beauty, and majesty, of that holy city: we shall see the generations of the faithful walking in the light of it, enjoying that "rest which remaineth for the people of God."

QUESTIONS.

Who are blessed?—Eat the labours?—Well is thee?—Explain ver. 4.—The Lord shall so bless thee that thou shalt see—what?—Why should we delight in the prosperity of the Church?—What is promised in this Psalm?

PSALM CXXIX.

The Church declares herself to have been often afflicted and as often preserved, and foretels the downfal of her enemies.

1 Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up : may Israel now say ;
2 Yea, many a time have they vexed me from my youth up : but they have not prevailed against me.
3 The plowers plowed upon my back : and made long furrows.
4 But the righteous Lord : hath hewn the snares of the ungodly in pieces.
5 Let them be confounded and turned backward : as many as have evil will at Sion.
6 Let them be even as the grass growing upon the house-tops : which withereth afore it be plucked up ;
7 Whereof the mower filleth not his hand : neither he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom.
8 So that they who go by say not so much as, The Lord prosper you : we wish you good luck in the name of the Lord.

Ver. 1. *have they*] Have my enemies.—*from my youth up :*] Ever since I was chosen of God and became a Church; the people of God have suffered wrong in all ages, even from the death of Abel until now : but perhaps it may point especially to the beginning, the infancy we may say, of the Church of Israel in Egypt. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." *Hosea* xi. 1.

Ver. 3. *The plowers plowed, &c.*] My stripes are like the furrows made in the ground by plowing.

Ver. 5. *Let them be, &c.*] They *shall* be ; it is a prophecy.

Ver. 6. *growing upon the house-tops :*] Such grass, having no depth of earth, very soon dies.

Ver. 7. *Whereof the mower, &c.*] The figure is this: The ungodly, instead of flourishing like a cornfield, which is reaped and gathered and blessed by the passers-by in harvest (*Ruth* ii. 4), shall be like this worthless grass, which is never gathered and never blessed by any body.

Ver. 8. *good luck*] Good fortune, a good time. In the *Bible Version* it is, "We bless you."

Affliction is nothing new to the people of God: the world,

which hates, will hinder and oppose them: but they have no reason to fear; for truly did St. John say to the brethren, "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." 1 *John* iv. 4. Like the bush which Moses beheld in the desert, the Church has "burned with fire," but is not consumed; and for the same reason, because God is in the midst of her. *Exod.* iii. 2. He, who took our nature upon Him, was also afflicted "from His youth," but His enemies "prevailed not against" Him in the end. And, therefore, let every one be encouraged to trust in "the righteous Lord," who will continue to bless His faithful servants, as He has always done. The Church of God and of Christ standeth "stedfast and immoveable;" but where are all the mighty nations which of old sought her ruin? they are swept away, and known no more; they have faded of themselves, like the bad grass without root, which is collected only to be burned. But the seed of the righteous remaineth for evermore; the Lord of the harvest sustains and preserves them; and in "the time of harvest," He will say unto the reapers, the blessed angels, "Gather the wheat into my barn." *Matt.* xiii. 30—39.

QUESTIONS.

Who have fought against Israel?—How long?—Have they prevailed?—Why not?—The plowers plowed?—Furrows?—Let them be, &c.?—Let them be as grass, of what kind?—Explain the figure here used.—Refer to the passage in Ruth, which speaks of the blessing in time of harvest.—What shall be done with the grass at last?—What with the wheat?—Explain this by the parable in St. Matthew.

PSALM CXXX.

This is the sixth penitential Psalm, written in a time of trouble, and expressing a confidence in the Lord for help. It is used in the service of the Church on Ash-Wednesday.

1 Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice.

2 O let thine ears consider well: the voice of my complaint.

3 If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss: O Lord, who may abide it?

4 For there is mercy with thee: therefore shalt thou be feared.

5 I look for the Lord; my soul doth wait for him: in his word is my trust.

6 My soul fleeth unto the Lord: before the morning watch, I say, before the morning watch.

7 O Israel, trust in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy : and with him is plenteous redemption.

8 And he shall redeem Israel : from all his sins.

Ver. 1. *Out of the deep*] The deep waters of affliction. *Psalm* xvii. 16 ; cxxiv. 4.

Ver. 3. *wilt be extreme to mark*] If Thou wilt mark every thing as an object of severest punishment.

Ver. 4. *shalt thou be feared.*] Shalt Thou be reverenced and served. If God were not merciful, the offender would have no encouragement to turn to Him, and might sin on in despair ; but under the assurance of pardon and acceptance, he is led to repent and seek God's favour, and to serve Him the more earnestly from a grateful sense of His undeserved goodness. *Isaiah* lv. 6—9. *Rom.* ii. 4. 1 *John* i. 8, 9.

Ver. 6. *the morning watch,*] See *Psalm* cxix., 19th portion, *ver.* 147, 148.

Ver. 7. *plenteous redemption,*] This is exactly the language of the Gospel : this the very office and work of Jesus, and the reason of His name : "Thou shalt call his name Jesus : for he shall save his people from their sins." *Matt.* i. 21.

Ver. 8. *from all his sins.*] From the guilt and punishment of them.

There is no depth of misery from which the Lord cannot, none from which He will not, raise the soul that waiteth for Him : from the "lowest pit" of distress, from the gates of hell, from the borders of the grave, and at length from the grave itself. He will have compassion on all our infirmities, and all our sins. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." *Heb.* iv. 15, 16. Happy then are they who seek Him, in His own appointed way, by repenting and believing on His name : all who so seek are sure to find Him, and the door of forgiveness will be opened to them. But they who will not be moved by His love, nor partake of His proffered mercy, must be left to perish ; "they have no cloak for their sin." From such 'hardness of heart, good Lord, deliver

us;' lest Thy neglected and abused mercy be turned into wrath. Blessed Jesus, let us look and wait for Thee, day by day, with a longing desire; that thou mayest "redeem us from all iniquity, and purify us to thyself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works." *Titus* ii. 13, 14.

QUESTIONS.

Out of the deep?—Extreme to mark?—Therefore shalt Thou be feared?—Before the morning watch?—Why should Israel trust in the Lord?—What do you mean by plenteous redemption?—From all his sins?—Show how this agrees with the Gospel.

PSALM CXXXI.

An exercise of humility and resignation to the will of God.

1 Lord, I am not high-minded: I have no proud looks.
2 I do not exercise myself in great matters: which are too high for me.
3 But I refrain my soul, and keep it low, like as a child that is weaned from his mother: yea, my soul is even as a weaned child.
4 O Israel, trust in the Lord: from this time forth for evermore.

Ver. 1. *I am not high-minded:*] David had been accused of aiming at the throne, and wishing to overthrow Saul: here he declares before God that he had no such lofty notions.

Ver. 3. *refrain my soul,*] Keep it in, "as it were with a bridle." *Psalm* xxxix. 2.—*as a weaned child.*] Which has lost its proper food, but still humbly depends upon its mother for support. So do I, in my state of privation and want, submit myself to the Lord's dealings, and entirely depend upon His tender mercy. Such was the humble resignation of the Lamb of God to the will of His heavenly Father, under the severest dispensations, under all His load of sorrows.

The grace of God will teach us to submit quietly to every circumstance and condition, in which the Lord may be pleased to place us, and to care very little about any worldly honours or enjoyments; having acquired a relish for heavenly things, the

soul is weaned even from those objects which it was once most fond of, and finds pleasure only in its humble submission to the God of wisdom and of love. "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." *Jer.* xlv. 5. "I have learned," says the Apostle, "in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." *Phil.* iv. 11—13. Our Lord has taught us the lesson of humility both by precept and example; by precept, "Learn of me;" by example, "for I am meek and lowly in heart." *Matt.* xi. 29. "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." *Matt.* xviii. 2—4.

QUESTIONS.

What did David declare that he was not?—In what did he not exercise himself?—Refrain my soul?—Like what?—What does this Psalm teach us?—How did Jesus teach the lesson of humility?

THE TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM CXXXII.

A Psalm composed, as many think, by Solomon, when the ark was taken to its resting-place (ver. 8,) *in the temple,* 1 Kings viii. 1—6. *Both the ark and the temple, in which the presence of God dwelt, were signs or types of Christ, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,* (Col. ii. 9,) *and therefore this Psalm is suitable for* Christmas Day. *See also* ver. 11, 12.

1 Lord, remember David : and all his trouble;
2 How he sware unto the Lord : and vowed a vow unto the Almighty God of Jacob;
3 I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house : nor climb up into my bed;
4 I will not suffer mine eyes to sleep, nor mine eyelids to

slumber : neither the temples of my head to take any rest;

5 Until I find out a place for the temple of the Lord : an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.

6 Lo, we heard of the same at Ephrata : and found it in the wood.

7 We will go into his tabernacle : and fall low on our knees before his footstool.

8 Arise, O Lord, into thy resting-place : thou, and the ark of thy strength.

9 Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness : and let thy saints sing with joyfulness.

10 For thy servant David's sake : turn not away the presence of thine anointed.

11 The Lord hath made a faithful oath unto David : and he shall not shrink from it;

12 Of the fruit of thy body : shall I set upon thy seat.

13 If thy children will keep my covenant, and my testimonies that I shall learn them : their children shall also sit upon thy seat for evermore.

14 For the Lord hath chosen Sion to be an habitation for himself : he hath longed for her.

15 This shall be my rest for ever : here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein.

16 I will bless her victuals with increase : and will satisfy her poor with bread.

17 I will deck her priests with health : and her saints shall rejoice and sing.

18 There shall I make the horn of David to flourish : I have ordained a lantern for mine anointed.

19 As for his enemies, I shall clothe them with shame : but upon himself shall his crown flourish.

Ver. 1. *all his trouble :*] His concern and search for the ark which was lost. 1 *Chron.* xiii. 1—4.

Ver. 2. *How he sware—and vowed*] No mention is made in Scripture of any such particular oath or vow. But we read of David's uneasiness at the thought of his dwelling in a palace of cedar, while the ark of God was meanly lodged. 2 *Sam.* vii. 2.

Ver. 3. *the tabernacle*] The dwelling-place.

Ver. 4. *mine eyes to sleep.*] He seems to have declared this resolution on some morning.

Ver. 6. *of the same*] Of the ark which was lost, *ver.* 1. We have no account of this report in the history.—*at Ephrata :*] At Bethlehem, (*Gen.* xxxv. 16,) the city of David, where Christ was born. *Micah* v. 2. *Matt.* ii. 6. —*in the wood.*] The ark was found at Kirjath-jearim, (1 *Chron.* xiii. 5, 6,) the name of which place signifies "the city of the woods."

Ver. 8. *Arise, &c.*] *Numb.* x. 35, 36. See on *Psalm*

lxviii. 1. This verse and ver. 9, 10, were used by Solomon in his prayer at the consecration of the temple. 2 *Chron.* vi. 41, 42. This gives us reason to suppose that Solomon was the author of the Psalm.

Ver. 9. *be clothed with righteousness :*] Let their beautiful garments be the true signs of a righteous character, and of holiness within.

Ver. 10.] For the sake of Thy servant David my father, turn not away Thy face (refuse not the prayer) of me, Thine anointed servant, his son.

Ver. 11. *a faithful oath*] 2 *Sam.* vii. 12. This is expressly applied by St. Peter to Jesus Christ. *Acts* ii. 30. It foreshows that Christ, springing from David according to the flesh, should be the Lord of that kingdom of righteousness, which the seat, or the throne, of David represented. *Luke* i. 32, 33.

Ver. 13. *my testimonies*] My laws and ordinances. *Psalm* xix. 7.

Ver. 15—18.] These are the words of Jehovah.

Ver. 17. *with health :*] With saving health, with righteousness and salvation. *Ver.* 9. *Psalm* cxix. 166, 21st portion.

Ver. 18. *the horn*] The power and kingdom of David. *Psalm* xviii. 1.—*a lantern*] A lamp, a light : "I will make my Anointed to prosper and rejoice." It may allude to the lamp in the tabernacle, which was kept always burning (*Exod.* xxvii. 20); just so, "the candle" of David, the light of his people's prosperity, should never be put out. *Psalm* xviii. 28.

God will always bless our desire and endeavour to promote His honour and glory: the object may not be answered exactly in the way we expected, but He will bring good out of every care and labour in His holy service. The poorest person in the world, who serves God in his family or amongst his friends and neighbours, shall "not lose his reward." Though his exertions be slighted, and his advice refused, yet his lamp shall shine in the darkness, and all shall see, and some shall admire, his blessedness. Whatever we see needful in the way of our duty, whether for the glory of God, or for the good of our fellow-creatures, or for our own salvation, that let us always resolve to do

without the least delay—"to-day, while it is called to-day." Our time is uncertain, and may be very short: and God requires all our diligence. A Saviour is indeed provided for us: "the faithful oath unto David" has been strictly kept and fulfilled; but we must also remember "to keep his covenant and his testimonies:" if we would have the benefit of His sacrifice, we must be clothed with righteousness; if we would inherit the blessings of His kingdom, we must be His humble and obedient subjects: and give all our time, all we are and all we have, to His great and glorious service. His saints, and none but His saints, have cause to "rejoice and sing;" and they shall "sing the song of the Lamb" for ever, with the holy angels, in His heavenly habitation.

QUESTIONS.

What did David swear and vow?—Heard of the same—of what?—And where?—Found it in the wood?—Let Thy priests be clothed—with what?—How were they commonly clothed?—Explain ver. 10.—What was the Lord's faithful oath to David?—Of whom is it spoken?—Where is it explained?—Show the meaning of ver. 12.—Upon what condition was the kingdom of David to be continued?—Her priests with health?—The Son of David?—A lantern?—For whom?—Why is this Psalm read on Christmas Day?

PSALM CXXXIII.

The praise of love and peace in Israel. The early Christians used this Psalm to give thanks for the union of Jews and Gentiles; and while the Church lasts, it will ever be used where Christian love abounds.

1 Behold how good and joyful a thing it is: brethren, to dwell together in unity!

2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down unto the beard: even unto Aaron's beard, and went down to the skirts of his clothing.

3 Like as the dew of Hermon: which fell upon the hill of Sion.

4 For there the Lord promised his blessing: and life evermore.

Ver. 1. *in unity!*] In one mind and one spirit.

Ver. 2. *the precious ointment*] Made of the richest perfumes. *Exod.* xxx. 22—33.—*to the skirts of his clothing.*] To the hem of his garment.

Ver. 3. *Hermon:*] A very fruitful hill mentioned *Deut.* iii. 8.—*of Sion.*] If it means Mount Sion, on which Jerusalem was built, we must say, "*and like* the dew which fell upon the hill of Sion." But it may mean that Sion "which was Hermon." *Deut.* iv. 48.

Ver. 4. *For there*] That is on Mount Sion, as is commonly supposed, from which both spiritual and eternal blessings came forth. But some think, that "for there" means "there in the dwellings of love," intimating a promise of blessedness to them who love one another.

As the holy oil, poured on the head of the high-priest Aaron spread all around its sweet perfumes, so does the holy love of Christians, coming forth from their Head and High-priest, Christ Jesus, spread itself to all whom it reaches in spirit and in truth. No praise can equal the excellence of Christian love; it is the fruit of the Spirit, the image of Christ; it comes from heaven, and makes earth like heaven; for "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." 1 *John* iv. 16. Charity, or love, is 'the very bond of peace and of all virtues;' for he that loveth his brother, will do him no wrong in any way, but will rejoice to do him all the good in his power; therefore does the Apostle truly declare, that "love is the fulfilling of the law." *Rom.* xiii. 10. Yet we must ever remember, that the love of one another is not only delightful and excellent, but absolutely necessary for every believer, as a proof of his being a true Christian. Our blessed Lord has said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." *John* xiii. 35. But this, like every other "good gift, is from above" (*James* i. 17); and therefore we must humbly beseech our blessed Lord 'to send his Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts this most excellent gift of charity;' that so we may be prepared for the goodly fellowship of saints and angels in heaven, where all is love; where all our kind affections and all the happiness which flows from them, shall be perfected in "life for evermore." 1 *Cor.* xiii.

QUESTIONS.

What is good and joyful?—Unity?—What is true love like?—To whom does it make us like?—What does it lead us to fulfil?—Who has commanded it?—In what words?—In what will it end?

PSALM CXXXIV.

An exhortation to the praise of God, and a prayer for His blessing.

1 Behold now, praise the Lord : all ye servants of the Lord;
2 Ye that by night stand in the house of the Lord : even in the courts of the house of our God.
3 Lift up your hands in the sanctuary : and praise the Lord.
4 The Lord that made heaven and earth : give thee blessing out of Sion.

Ver. 1—3.] The Levites attended at the temple day and night, in their regular courses, (1 *Chron.* ix. 33,) and these three verses are supposed to have been addressed by some of them, on coming out at night, to the others who remained within on duty.—*the sanctuary :*] The holy place, the temple.

Ver. 4.] This verse was the answer of the party within the temple, who begged a blessing upon the head of those that admonished them.

The praise of God in His Church, even upon earth, never ceases; as one goes to rest, another takes up the holy and delightful theme: let us never fail to bear our part, willingly and gladly, in this exalted work; let us account it as our greatest privilege and honour. Let us, moreover, encourage one another in the grateful performance of this duty, and be thankful to every one who stirs us up to the faithful remembrance of it; esteeming him as our kindest monitor, and imploring a blessing upon him for his pious love towards us. Let children bless their parents, and scholars their teachers, and people their ministers, and all bless their neighbours, for such friendly offices and warnings. Praise is the happy employment of angels; and, ere long, all the true servants of God shall praise Him in the sanctuary above, and bless His name, and be blessed in Him, without interruption, and without end.

QUESTIONS.

What is the subject of this Psalm?—Who should praise the Lord?—Where should they lift up their hands?—What duties are we taught in this Psalm?

PSALM CXXXV.

A general form of thanksgiving for God's great mercies to His people Israel.

1 O praise the Lord, laud ye the name of the Lord : praise it, O ye servants of the Lord;

2 Ye that stand in the house of the Lord : in the courts of the house of our God.

3 O praise the Lord, for the Lord is gracious : O sing praises unto his name, for it is lovely.

4 For why? the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself : and Israel for his own possession.

5 For I know that the Lord is great : and that our Lord is above all gods.

6 Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth : and in the sea, and in all deep places.

7 He bringeth forth the clouds from the ends of the world : and sendeth forth lightnings with the rain, bringing the winds out of his treasures.

8 He smote the first-born of Egypt : both of man and beast.

9 He hath sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O thou land of Egypt : upon Pharaoh, and all his servants.

10 He smote divers nations : and slew mighty kings;

11 Sehon king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Basan : and all the kingdoms of Canaan;

12 And gave their land to be an heritage : even an heritage unto Israel his people.

13 Thy name, O Lord, endureth for ever : so doth thy memorial, O Lord, from one generation to another.

14 For the Lord will avenge his people : and be gracious unto his servants.

15 As for the images of the heathen, they are but silver and gold : the work of men's hands.

16 They have mouths, and speak not : eyes have they, but they see not.

17 They have ears, and yet they hear not : neither is there any breath in their mouths.

18 They that make them are like unto them : and so are all they that put their trust in them.

19 Praise the Lord, ye house of Israel : praise the Lord, ye house of Aaron.

20 Praise the Lord, ye house of Levi : ye that fear the Lord, praise the Lord.

21 Praised be the Lord out of Sion : who dwelleth at Jerusalem.

Ver. 1. *laud ye.*] Praise ye.

Ver. 2. *Ye that stand, &c.*] Ye ministers of His, especially.

Ver. 3.] Here are two reasons for the work of praise. First, the goodness of the Lord; secondly, the pleasantness of the service.

Ver. 4.] A third reason is here given: because Israel was God's own people, chosen for this very purpose. *Deut.* vii. 6—8. St. Peter sets forth the duty of Christians to praise God upon the same ground. 1 *Pet.* ii. 9, 10.

Ver. 5.] A fourth reason was the greatness and power of God, who was able to protect His people, and to destroy the foolish idols of their mightiest enemies.

Ver. 6. *Whatsoever, &c.*] God made all things as He pleased, and governs all things as He pleases; the great Creator and absolute Sovereign of the whole world.

Ver. 7. *from the ends of the world:*] From farther than we can see. *Jer.* x. 13; xiv. 22. *Job* xxxviii. 22—28.

Ver. 8. *He smote, &c.*] *Exod.* xii. 12. 29.

Ver. 9. *tokens and wonders*] Wonderful tokens, signs of His wonderful power. *Exod.* vii. xv.

Ver. 10. *divers*] Different.

Ver. 11. *Sehon, &c.*] *Numb.* xxi. 21. 35. *Deut.* ii. 30—33; iii. 1—10.—*of Canaan;*] *Josh.* x.—xii.

Ver. 12. *an heritage:*] A possession.

Ver. 13. *thy memorial,*] The keeping up a remembrance of what Thou hast done; the celebration of Thy praise.

Ver. 14. *will avenge*] Will deliver His people; will see them righted, as we say.

Ver. 15. *the images*] The idols, or false gods. For ver. 15—18, see *Psalm* cxv. 4—8.

Ver. 21. *out of Sion:*] *Psalm* l. 2.

How sad it is, that we should need so much encouraging to praise our God; and yet, after all, be so neglectful as we often are, in this most reasonable, delightful, and glorious service! To the Lord we owe our being, and every thing we have in life: He has made us, and he has preserved us to this hour. And in this respect, it is true, all the people of the earth have reason to be thankful, as well as ourselves. Yet is there another ground, on which we have far greater reason than most other people, for praise and gratitude to the God of mercy; in that He has "chosen us unto himself;" that we have been born and

brought up in a Christian land, that we are 'members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven;' that we are members of "the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." *Acts* xx. 28. And unless we forfeit our blessing, and right of membership, deeply sensible shall we be of the Lord's inestimable loving-kindness to our souls. Though the tokens and wonders wrought for Israel were very great, and though the heritage bestowed upon Israel was rich and valuable; yet these were but feeble shadows of what He has done for us. If then, to neglect the praise of God were a reproach to Israel, what a crime must it be in us! O let us pour out our hearts before Him; let us rejoice in every opportunity of praising His Holy Name; yea, let our whole life be one continued act of devout thanksgiving to our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier: to whom be all honour and glory, world without end.

QUESTIONS.

Laud?—What reasons are here given for praising God, ver. 3—5?—Tokens and wonders?—Divers?—An heritage?—Thy memorial?—Will avenge, &c.?—The images of the heathen?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM CXXXVI.

A Hymn of praise and thanksgiving, with a chorus in each verse.

1 O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious: and his mercy endureth for ever.

2 O give thanks unto the God of all gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.

3 O thank the Lord of all lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.

4 Who only doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.

5 Who by his excellent wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever.

6 Who laid out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever.

7 Who hath made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever.

8 The sun to rule the day: for his mercy endureth for ever;

9 The moon and the stars to govern the night: for his mercy endureth for ever.

10 Who smote Egypt with their first-born: for his mercy endureth for ever;

11 And brought out Israel from among them : for his mercy endureth for ever;

12 With a mighty hand, and stretched-out arm : for his mercy endureth for ever.

13 Who divided the Red Sea in two parts : for his mercy endureth for ever;

14 And made Israel to go through the midst of it : for his mercy endureth for ever.

15 But as for Pharaoh and his host, he overthrew them in the Red Sea : for his mercy endureth for ever.

16 Who led his people through the wilderness : for his mercy endureth for ever.

17 Who smote great kings : for his mercy endureth for ever.

18 Yea, and slew mighty kings : for his mercy endureth for ever;

19 Sehon king of the Amorites : for his mercy endureth for ever;

20 And Og the king of Basan : for his mercy endureth for ever;

21 And gave away their land for an heritage : for his mercy endureth for ever.

22 Even for an heritage unto Israel his servant : for his mercy endureth for ever.

23 Who remembered us when we were in trouble : for his mercy endureth for ever;

24 And hath delivered us from our enemies : for his mercy endureth for ever.

25 Who giveth food to all flesh : for his mercy endureth for ever.

26 O give thanks unto the God of heaven : for his mercy endureth for ever.

27 O give thanks unto the Lord of lords : for his mercy endureth for ever.

Ver. 2. *the God of all gods :*] High above the heathen idols, as well as all that are called gods, whether among men or angels. *Psalm* lxxxii. 1—6 ; xcvii. 9. *Eph.* i. 20, 21.

Ver. 4. *Who only*] God works alone, by Himself; and all creatures work by His power.

Ver. 6. *the earth above the waters :*] Making it to stand out above the waters, and let the dry ground appear. 2 *Pet.* iii. 5. Thus, in the second commandment, we read of "the waters *under* the earth." *Exod.* xx. 4.

Ver. 7—9.] See *Gen.* i. 14—19.

Ver. 10—15.] *Exod.* xii.—xiv.

Ver. 16.] *Numb.* xxxiii.

Ver. 17—22.] See on *Psalm* cxxxv. 11, 12.

Ver. 25. *food to all flesh :*] Not only to us His peculiar people, but to all mankind. *Psalm* civ. 15. 27.

We are so entirely indebted to the Lord's undeserved mercy, that we should never be weary in repeating our sense of it: no one, indeed, who does feel it, can ever be thus weary; our best delight will always be to praise the goodness of our God. In all His works of creation and providence, in every display of His majesty and power, we behold His mercy shining forth, and casting a light and glory upon all. Blessed be His name who hath "done greater wonders" for our redemption, than He did for Israel of old; having provided salvation for us through His eternal Son, and revealed it in His holy word. May we experience His redeeming power in our hearts; that "being saved from our enemies, we may serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life!" *Luke* i. 67—75. And may He, who "giveth food to all flesh," feed our souls with "the bread which cometh down from heaven;" that so we may be animated and enabled to praise Him, "because he is good, and because his mercy endureth for ever!"

QUESTIONS.

O give thanks—why?—God of all gods?—Who only doeth, &c.?—By what did God make the heavens?—The earth above the waters?—Made great lights?—What are they?—Where have we an account of their creation?—What is the chorus of this Psalm?

PSALM CXXXVII.

The mournful state of Israel, when captive in Babylon; the enemies of Jerusalem shall be destroyed.

1 By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept: when we remembered thee, O Sion.

2 As for our harps, we hanged them up: upon the trees that are therein.

3 For they that led us away captive required of us then a song, and melody, in our heaviness: Sing us one of the songs of Sion.

4 How shall we sing the Lord's song: in a strange land?

5 If I forget thee, O Jerusalem: let my right hand forget her cunning.

6 If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth: yea, if I prefer not Jerusalem in my mirth.

7 Remember the children of Edom, O Lord, in the day of Jerusalem: how they said, Down with it, down with it, even to the ground.

8 O daughter of Babylon, wasted with misery: yea, happy shall he be that rewardeth thee, as thou hast served us.

9 Blessed shall he be that taketh thy children: and throweth them against the stones.

Ver. 1. *By the waters of Babylon*] On the banks of the river Euphrates.—*we sat down*] Deeply lamenting, *Lam.* ii. 10.

Ver. 2. *therein.*] In the country of Babylon: we hung up our harps as useless.

Ver. 3. *required of us then, &c.*] They asked us, by way of insult, to sing the praises of God in our distress and bondage; implying that God neither would nor could deliver us out of their hand.

Ver. 5. *If I forget*] This is said in the name of each of them.—*forget her cunning.*] Forget her skill in playing upon the harp. Sooner could I forget how to play, than forget Jesusalem.

Ver. 6. *let my tongue cleave, &c.*] Let me never be able to sing again.—*in my mirth.*] In any moments of joy I may have in Babylon; "if I prefer not Jerusalem above all other means of joy."

Ver. 7. *in the day of Jerusalem:*] In the day of her downfal. The Edomites were brethren according to the flesh, being descended from Esau, the brother of Jacob (*Gen.* xxxvi. 1); but they joined and helped the enemies of Israel; and for this vengeance was denounced against them. See the book of the prophet Obadiah.

Ver. 8. *O daughter of Babylon,*] O Babylon. *Psalm* ix. 14.—*wasted with misery:*] Doomed to destruction. In the *Bible Version* it is, "who art to be destroyed."—*yea, happy, &c.*] Happy shall be he, who by thy punishment delivers the people of God, fulfils His holy word, and promotes His glory.

Ver. 9. *thy children:*] The destruction of the children was a thing terrible in itself; but it was a necessary part of the general overthrow. And even though the conquerors of Babylon should be cruel, still the work itself would be blessed in the end. And God could make the death of the children a means of their happiness, just as in the case of the children murdered by Herod (*Matt.* ii. 16); just as in any other similar case. This slaughter of the infants is foretold by Isaiah, ch. xiii. 16. See the whole of that chapter.

In this beautiful and affecting Psalm, the Church of Israel is represented as weeping over her city and temple and country laid waste, her earthly comforts gone, her honour laid in the dust—but, most of all, over the loss of her spiritual privileges and blessings, of the means of grace and the worship of her God. We often know not the value of a blessing till we have lost it. Israel was insensible and unfaithful while living in the light of God's countenance; but in the dark night of affliction, in the hiding of God's face, the heart was sad and miserable; and past mercies were feelingly acknowledged, with many tears of bitterness and sorrow. It is a lesson written for our learning! Let us highly prize, and faithfully use, the favours of God, whilst they are continued to us; lest He take them away in His wrath, and we find out their value when it is too late. The Bible, how vast and blessed a treasure it contains of life and salvation! The Lord's day, and the Lord's house, how great and glorious their privileges and benefits! The free use of these favours is graciously permitted to us; we enjoy them in peace and safety. But if they be despised or neglected, who can say that the Lord will not, by some awful and avenging visitation, deprive us of these blessings? And if it should be so, we shall see and lament the precious opportunities we have lost; and sit down in dust and ashes, weeping and wailing. "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light."—*John* xii. 35, 36.

QUESTIONS.

Where did they sit down?—To do what?—What made them do so?—What did they do with their harps?—What did their conquerors require of them?—And for what purpose?—Forget her cunning?—Let my tongue cleave, &c.?—The children of Edom, who were they?—For what were they to be remembered?—What did they say?—In the day of Jerusalem?—Daughter of Babylon?—Wasted with misery?—What lesson may we learn from this Psalm?

PSALM CXXXVIII.

A thanksgiving for deliverances, and a foretelling of the call of the Gentiles to the praise and glory of God in the Gospel.

1 I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, with my whole heart: even before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy Name, because of thy loving-kindness and truth : for thou hast magnified thy Name, and thy word, above all things.

3 When I called upon thee, thou heardest me : and enduedst my soul with much strength.

4 All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord : for they have heard the words of thy mouth.

5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord : that great is the glory of the Lord.

6 For though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly : as for the proud, he beholdeth them afar off.

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, yet shalt thou refresh me : thou shalt stretch forth thy hand upon the furiousness of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

8 The Lord shall make good his loving-kindness toward me : yea, thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever; despise not then the works of thine own hands.

Ver. 1. *before the gods*] Before the kings and judges of the earth. *Psalm* lxxxii. 1 ; cxix. 46, sixth Portion.

Ver. 2. *toward thy holy temple,*] *Psalm* v. 7.—*magnified thy Name, &c.*] Has set forth Thy mercy, and fulfilled Thy promises, in a wonderful manner.

Ver. 4, 5. *All the kings, &c.*] David might expect that some of the neighbouring princes and people would be convinced by beholding the power and goodness of Jehovah; but clearly the words look forward to future times, to the conversion of the Gentiles under the Gospel. *Psalm* xxii. 27—32; lxxii. 8—11.

Ver. 6. *beholdeth them afar off.*] Will not come near to assist and bless them. Humility is the way to salvation and glory: this we are taught throughout the Bible. 1 *Sam.* ii. 7, 8. *Prov.* iii. 34. *Isa.* lvii. 15. *Dan.* iv. 34—37. *Luke* xviii. 9—14. *Phil.* ii. 8, 9.

Ver. 7.] These words may be properly considered as spoken by the Messiah Himself.

Ver. 8. *despise not*] Do not forsake nor neglect the good work which Thou hast graciously begun. *Phil.* i. 6.

They who rely upon the loving-kindness and truth of God, through Jesus Christ, will be sure to find Him faithful to His word. Nothing is too great for His power, nothing too large for His love: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered

him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" *Rom.* viii. 32. In the day when the Redeemer cried in the agony of His soul, the Father heard Him, and strengthened Him to finish the mighty work which He had freely undertaken: and "having humbled himself even to the death upon the cross," He is now exalted to the throne of glory: for His sake the Lord will strengthen all who fervently pray in His name, that they may be carried through all their trials: Jehovah will never forsake any humble, faithful servant, but will give him grace and power to "endure unto the end, and be saved." But none except "the poor in spirit," "the meek and lowly in heart," will ever be received: there is no other way to God's favour for rich or poor, king or subject, master or slave; "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." 1 *Pet.* v. 5. "Submit yourselves, therefore, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." *James* iv. 6—10.

QUESTIONS.

Before the gods?—Magnified Thy name and Thy word?—All the kings, &c., what does this foretel?—Explain ver. 6 from other passages.—Despise not?—Despised not what?

THE TWENTY-NINTH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM CXXXIX.

In this admirable Psalm, David, when slandered and oppressed, makes his appeal to the heart-searching God, who is omniscient (knowing all things) and omnipresent (in every place). He foretels the ruin of his enemies, and prays to be made perfect in the right way.

1 O Lord, thou hast searched me out, and known me: thou knowest my down-sitting, and mine up-rising; thou understandest my thoughts long before.

2 Thou art about my path, and about my bed: and spiest out all my ways.

3 For lo, there is not a word in my tongue: but thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether.

4 Thou hast fashioned me behind and before : and laid thine hand upon me.

5 Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me : I cannot attain unto it.

6 Whither shall I go then from thy Spirit : or whither shall I go then from thy presence ?

7 If I climb up into heaven, thou art there : if I go down to hell, thou art there also.

8 If I take the wings of the morning : and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea ;

9 Even there also shall thy hand lead me : and thy right hand shall hold me.

10 If I say, Peradventure the darkness shall cover me : then shall my night be turned to day.

11 Yea, the darkness is no darkness with thee, but the night is as clear as the day : the darkness and light to thee are both alike.

12 For my reins are thine : thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

13 I will give thanks unto thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made : marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.

14 My bones are not hid from thee : though I be made secretly, and fashioned beneath in the earth.

15 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect : and in thy book were all my members written ;

16 Which day by day were fashioned : when as yet there was none of them.

17 How dear are thy counsels unto me, O God : O how great is the sum of them !

18 If I tell them, they are more in number than the sand : when I wake up, I am present with thee.

19 Wilt thou not slay the wicked, O God : depart from me, ye blood-thirsty men.

20 For they speak unrighteously against thee : and thine enemies take thy name in vain.

21 Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee : and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee ?

22 Yea, I hate them right sore : even as though they were mine enemies.

23 Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart : prove me, and examine my thoughts.

24 Look well if there be any way of wickedness in me : and lead me in the way everlasting.

Ver. 1. *my down-sitting, &c.*] Every thing I do ; when I rise to labour, and when I sit down to rest.—*long before.*] Before they are uttered, or even found in my mind. In the *Bible Version* it is "afar off;" which may mean, "Thou understandest my thoughts from heaven, thy dwelling place." *Psalm* cxiii. 5.

Ver. 2. *about my path, and about my bed :*] When I journey and when I sleep, by day and by night.

Ver. 3.] Though I speak not, Thou knowest all that is in my mind.

Ver. 4. *Thou hast fashioned me*] Thou hast appointed and ordered all about me. In the *Bible Version* it is, "Thou hast beset me."

Ver. 5. *I cannot attain*] I cannot reach to or comprehend it.

Ver. 6. *from thy Spirit:*] From the presence of the Holy Spirit. *Psalm* li. 11.

Ver. 7. *If I climb*] If I were to climb.—*to hell,*] To the grave, to the dead.

Ver. 8. *the wings of the morning, &c.:*] It means, if I could go forth with the sun when he rises, and travel with him till he sets; from east to west, all over the world. The sea lay to the west of Judea, and the sun appeared to set in it.

Ver. 10. *Peradventure*] Perhaps, possibly.—*be turned to day.*] My night shall be as day in Thy sight.

Ver. 12. *my reins*] Every inward part of my body. *Psalm* vii. 10.

Ver. 13. *fearfully and wonderfully*] The various parts are so finely and delicately made, that it seems as if the least thing would put them out of order; and therefore we not only wonder at such beauty and skill in our bodily frame, but almost feel afraid for its safety.

Ver. 14. *My bones*] The substance of my body was not hid from Thee, even before I was born.—*beneath in the earth.*] Though I were in a state as dark as if I were under ground; though "I was covered," &c. ver. 12.

Ver. 15. *being imperfect:*] Not fully formed.—*in thy book*] My limbs, even in that early stage, before they were framed, were known to Thee, as if written or marked out in a book.

Ver. 16. *day by day*] Increasing by degrees.

Ver. 17. *thy counsels*] Thy designs and dealings with me, in my creation and preservation.

Ver. 18. *If I tell them,*] If I try or begin to number them.—*when I wake up,*] As soon as I wake in the morning, I call to mind Thy presence, Thy goodness, and power.

Ver. 19.] Since Thou seest all things, and "beholdest

ungodliness and wrong," wilt Thou not punish, &c. *Psalm* x. 15—17.

Ver. 21. *hate them,*] Not their persons, but their ways. *Psalm* cxix. 113, 15th Portion.

Ver. 23. *and seek*] Search my heart to the very bottom. David, like every sincere believer and servant, resolved to walk perfectly with God. There was not one secret sin which he desired to keep. But since the heart of man is so deceitful and so difficult to be known, (*Jer.* xvii. 9,) he begs of God to search him, and show him to himself; that he might reform whatever was wrong, and thus be found in the way of everlasting life. See *John* iii. 20, 21.

We can never sin with safety, but in a place where the eye of God cannot behold us. And where is that place? If we had a mind to escape His notice and inspection, "whither should we go?" Heaven is the seat of His glory, the whole created world is the scene of His providence, and He has "the keys of death and hell" (*Rev.* i. 18); so that our endeavours would be equally vain, whether we could ascend or descend, or fly abroad upon the wings of the morning light, from east to west. The arm of the Lord will reach us every where. Darkness may indeed conceal us and our deeds from the sight of men; but God's presence, like that of the sun, turns night into day, and makes all things manifest in His sight. When secretly tempted to evil, let us always say, "God is here;" "how can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" *Gen.* xxxix. 9. We should examine ourselves, as continually in His sight; remembering that every thought and affection, no less than every deed, is thoroughly known to Him, and observed for judgment. *Matt.* v. 22—28. *Rom.* ii. 16. And in every condition, in every walk of life, in every trial, let us "watch and pray," that we never offend our ever-present God. The same consideration, which should restrain us from sin, should also encourage us to work righteousness, and comfort us under all our sorrows; namely, the thought that we are never out of the sight and protection of our Maker. The piety and the charity which are practised in cottages; the labour and the pain which are patiently endured in our daily employments; the disappointments and vexations of life which are met with resignation; all are under the eye of Jehovah, and are noted down by Him against the day of recompence. He sees, and He will reward, all we do, and all we suffer, as becometh Christians. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with

me." *Psalm* xxiii. 4. "In thy presence is the fulness of joy, and at thy right hand there is pleasure for evermore." *Psalm* xvi. 12.

QUESTIONS.

Omniscient?—Omnipresent?—Explain ver. 1.—About my path, and my bed?—Explain ver. 3.—Fashioned me behind and before?—Cannot attain?—Down to hell?—Explain ver. 8.—Peradventure?—My reins are Thine?—Fearfully and wonderfully?—My bones not hid?—Written in Thy book?—How dear are Thy counsels?—Do not I hate them?—Seek the ground, &c.?—What do we learn from this Psalm?

PSALM CXL.

A Prayer of David against violent persecutors, whose destruction he foretels. The whole Psalm applies to the Messiah, and to the Church in all ages.

1 Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man : and preserve me from the wicked man.

2 Who imagine mischief in their hearts : and stir up strife all the day long.

3 They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent : adders' poison is under their lips.

4 Keep me, O Lord, from the hands of the ungodly : preserve me from the wicked men, who are purposed to overthrow my goings.

5 The proud have laid a snare for me, and spread a net abroad with cords : yea, and set traps in my way.

6 I said unto the Lord, thou art my God : hear the voice of my prayers, O Lord.

7 O Lord God, thou strength of my health : thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.

8 Let not the ungodly have his desire, O Lord : let not his mischievous imagination prosper, lest they be too proud.

9 Let the mischief of their own lips fall upon the head of them : that compass me about.

10 Let hot burning coals fall upon them : let them be cast into the fire, and into the pit, that they never rise up again.

11 A man full of words shall not prosper upon the earth : evil shall hunt the wicked person to overthrow him.

12 Sure I am, that the Lord will avenge the poor : and maintain the cause of the helpless.

13 The righteous also shall give thanks unto thy Name : and the just shall continue in thy sight.

Ver. 3. *They have sharpened, &c.*] See *Psalm* lii. 3 ; lviii. 4.

Ver. 5. *The proud, &c.*] See *Psalm* x. 4—12. They have laid wait for me, as a fowler does for his game.

Ver. 6.] Here we observe the proper means of deliverance —trust in God, and prayer.

Ver. 7. *of my health*:] Of my salvation.—*thou hast covered, &c.*] Thou hast been my shield, my protection in former dangers. *Psalm* v. 13.

Ver. 8. *his mischievous imagination*] His plan of mischief.

Ver. 9. *of their own lips, &c.*] *Psalm* v. 11; vii. 16, 17.

Ver. 10. *burning coals, &c.*] *Psalm* xi. 7; xviii. 8. In this verse (as in ver. 8, 9,) David foretels the overthrow of his own wicked enemies: as also of those who persecuted the Lord Jesus, whom he represented.

Ver. 11. *full of words*] Of wicked and slandering words. —*shall hunt*] Just as they hunted David. Ver. 5.

Ver. 12. *the poor—the helpless.*] Such as David was, and Jesus—and all "who suffer for the truth's sake."

Ver. 13. *shall continue in thy sight.*] Shall dwell in Thy presence.

The Lord is "the strength of salvation" of all who trust and worship Him as their God: He will hear their prayers, and "cover their head" in the midst of the "fiery darts of the wicked;" every former deliverance is an earnest of future victory; and they shall be exalted to glory, when their enemies are "clothed with shame;" when they are enduring, for the hardness of their hearts, and the wickedness of their lives, "the hot burning coals" of everlasting vengeance. For God will assuredly plead the cause of the meek and lowly, who are used by the world as their blessed Master was used before them. A day will come, when, delivered out of all their troubles, they "shall give thanks unto thy Name," O Lord; and "dwell in thy presence" for evermore.

QUESTIONS.

What is the subject of this Psalm?—Explain ver. 5, what is the figure?—Strength of my health?—Covered my head, &c.? —Mischievous imagination?—Hot burning coals?—A man full of words?—To whom may the Psalm be applied?

PSALM CXLI.

David wrote this Psalm probably when flying from the rage of Saul. 1 Sam. xxvii.

1 Lord, I call upon thee, haste thee unto me : and consider my voice when I cry unto thee.

2 Let my prayer be set forth in thy sight as the incense : and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice.

3 Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth : and keep the door of my lips.

4 O let not mine heart be inclined to any evil thing : let me not be occupied in ungodly works with the men that work wickedness, lest I eat of such things as please them.

5 Let the righteous rather smite me friendly : and reprove me.

6 But let not their precious balms break my head : yea, I will pray yet against their wickedness.

7 Let their judges be overthrown in stony places : that they may hear my words, for they are sweet.

8 Our bones lie scattered before the pit : like as when one breaketh and heweth wood upon the earth.

9 But mine eyes look unto thee, O Lord God : in thee is my trust, O cast not out my soul.

10 Keep me from the snare that they have laid for me : and from the traps of the wicked doers.

11 Let the ungodly fall into their own nets together : and let me ever escape them.

Ver. 2. *Let my prayer, &c.*] Being at a distance from the tabernacle in another country, where he could offer no incense or sacrifice, he desired that his prayers might be accepted instead. His heart was at Sion, though he was far away.

Ver. 3. *Set a watch, &c.*] David feared lest he should be tempted, by the violence or vexations of the enemy, to use any rash words, unbecoming his situation and profession as the servant of God.

Ver. 4. *lest I eat, &c.*] Lest I become partaker of their unholy feastings, and be induced to comply with their sinful customs and ways.

Ver. 6. *their precious balms*] Let the reproofs of the righteous be like precious balm or oil, soothing and refreshing ; and not as violent blows, to break my head.—*against their wickedness.*] Against the wickedness of my enemies ; that I may be neither destroyed nor corrupted by them.

Ver. 7. *Let their judges, &c.*] Let the unjust judges be punished and overthrown, as down a stony precipice; so that the people, taking warning from the fate of their rulers, may hear my divine words, which are full of sweet comfort to all who receive them into their heart. *Psalm* xix. 10.

Ver. 8. *heweth wood*] The bones of God's servants, who have been slain, lie spread about, like chips from the axe of a woodman. It may allude to the cruel slaughter of the eighty-five priests. 1 *Sam.* xxii. 17—19. *Psalm* lii.

Ver. 9.] *Psalm* cxl. 6.

Ver. 9, 10.] *Psalm* cxl. 5. 9.

When the Lord gives us opportunities of public worship, we must never suppose, as many misguided people do, that He will accept our private prayers instead; never suppose that He will be as well pleased with our worship at home, as with our worship in His house. God can never accept us, but when we are acting in obedience to His holy will and word: it is for Him to appoint how He will be served on His own day, or on any other day. But if we are prevented by sickness, or any other calamity, from attendance at His house, then He will graciously receive such service as we are able to offer, the lifting up of our hands and hearts in our own dwelling. When we would be in His temple if we could, He will honour and accept us wherever we are. Often may our lot be cast among the ungodly and profane; in such cases we must be mindful of our words, that we never, by any angry or unworthy expressions, "give occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme." We must be careful of our conduct, that we never, by any sinful compliances, bring a stain upon our holy profession, or give men reason to say, that our religion is a vain and fruitless thing. We must pray to God for His grace and strength, that whatever we say or do, we may say and do all for His honour and glory. And whenever we are "overtaken in a fault," and a faithful friend reproves us, we must take it in good part, and be thankful for such reproof. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." *Prov.* xxvii. 6.

QUESTIONS.

Explain ver. 2, 3.—Lest I eat of such things, &c.?—Let not their precious balms, &c.?—Explain ver. 7.—Our bones lie scattered—like what?—To what event does this allude?—From what does David pray to be kept?—Show the lessons which we learn from this Psalm.

Evening Prayer.

PSALM CXLII.

It is said that this Psalm was composed by David on one of the occasions when he was hid in a cave from the rage of his persecutors. 1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2; xxiv. 1—3. *He was in the greatest distress and danger; but he trusted in God and prayed, and was delivered.*

1 I cried unto the Lord with my voice : yea, even unto the Lord did I make my supplication.

2 I poured out my complaints before him : and showed him of my trouble.

3 When my spirit was in heaviness, thou knewest my path : in the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.

4 I looked also upon my right hand : and saw there was no man that would know me.

5 I had no place to flee unto : and no man cared for my soul.

6 I cried unto thee, O Lord, and said : thou art my hope, and my portion in the land of the living.

7 Consider my complaint : for I am brought very low.

8 O deliver me from my persecutors : for they are too strong for me.

9 Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks unto thy Name : which thing if thou wilt grant me, then shall the righteous resort unto my company.

Ver. 2. *and showed him*] Thus did Hezekiah, *Isaiah* xxxvii. 14—20.

Ver. 3. *thou knewest*] Thine eye was upon me, in all my trouble and all my ways.

Ver. 4. *upon my right hand :*] For some one to defend me. *Psalm* cix. 30.—*that would know me.*] That would acknowledge or stand up for me.

Ver. 5. *for my soul.*] For my life.

Ver. 6. *in the land of the living.*] As long as I live. I have no possession or inheritance but Thee.

Ver. 9. *out of prison,*] Bring me out of the cave.—*resort unto my company.*] They shall flock to me without fear. And it was so : David was rescued, exalted to the throne, and joined by all the tribes of Israel. Thus Christ, the true David, was delivered from His stronger persecutors, brought from the sepulchre, exalted to the heavenly

throne, owned and honoured by the converted nations, who became the true Israel and people of God.

David's situation in the cave was full of distress and fear, and seemed to be almost hopeless; he was surrounded by his enemies, deserted by his friends, left alone in his bewailing. But in that dismal situation he did not despair; he had a Friend in heaven, in whose bosom he "poured forth his complaint," and laid before Him the sad circumstances of his need and his danger. In all our difficulties and wants, let us follow the example of David, and that of a greater than David, who, when Jews and Gentiles conspired against Him, and He was left all alone, in the garden and on the cross, "gave himself unto prayer." Nor let us fear, though we be "brought very low." The Lord sees us and is present with us, however lonely we may be: He careth for us, however man may oppress or despise: "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." *John* x. 14. All who know Him, who believe in Him, and love Him, He will own, and protect, and bless, wherever they are: and He will finally redeem them from the bondage of sin, and from the prison of the grave, to join the great assembly before the throne, and there to praise His name for ever.

QUESTIONS.

What was the occasion of this Psalm?—Thou knewest my path?—Upon my right hand?—That would know me?—For my soul?—In the land of the living?—Resort unto my company?—Show how this prayer was granted?

PSALM CXLIII.

David, in some great trouble, praying for mercy and declaring his faith and trust in God, is an example to the Church, and to all her children, in all times of sorrow. This therefore is one of the Penitential Psalms used on Ash-Wednesday; *it is the seventh and last.*

1 Hear my prayer, O Lord, and consider my desire: hearken unto me for thy truth and righteousness' sake.

2 And enter not into judgement with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

3 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground: he hath laid me in the darkness,

as the men that have been long dead.

4 Therefore is my spirit vexed within me : and my heart within me is desolate.

5 Yet do I remember the time past; I muse upon all thy works : yea, I exercise myself in the works of thy hands.

6 I stretch forth my hands unto thee : my soul gaspeth unto thee as a thirsty land.

7 Hear me, O Lord, and that soon, for my spirit waxeth faint : hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

8 O let me hear thy loving-kindness betimes in the morning, for in thee is my trust : show thou me the way that I should walk in, for I lift up my soul unto thee.

9 Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies : for I flee unto thee to hide me.

10 Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee, for thou art my God : let thy loving Spirit lead me forth into the land of righteousness.

11 Quicken me, O Lord, for thy Name's sake : and for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

12 And of thy goodness slay mine enemies : and destroy all them that vex my soul; for I am thy servant.

Ver. 2. *into judgement*] If thou wert to deal according to strict justice, no man living, much less such a sinner as I, could stand clear in Thy sight. This is the true language of repentance and faith; a deep sense of sin and an entire dependence upon God's undeserved mercy. This is the language of the Gospel; only that the Gospel shows us more clearly through whom and by what means this mercy is obtained, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Rom.* iii. 20—26. *Gal.* ii. 16. *Tit.* iii. 5—7. See also *Luke* xviii. 10—14.—*justified.*] Accounted righteous in himself no man can be; but the true believer is accepted and considered as righteous, through the righteousness of Christ.

Ver. 3. *in the darkness,*] Perhaps alluding to his having been driven to dark hiding places, 1 *Sam.* xxii. xxiv.

Ver. 4. *vexed*] Troubled.—*desolate.*] Sad, without earthly comfort.

Ver. 5. *muse upon—exercise myself in*] I think and dwell upon Thy wonderful tokens of mercy and power, shown to our fathers of old.

Ver. 6. *my soul gaspeth*] As a thirsty land for the rain. *Psalm* lxiii. 2.

Ver. 7. *waxeth faint :*] Groweth faint and weak.—*lest I be like*] Lest I die.

Ver. 8. *in the morning,*] *Psalm* xl. 5.

Ver. 10. *thy loving Spirit*] Thy good Spirit. Here again we perceive the true doctrine of the Gospel; a reliance upon the guiding and guarding power of the Holy Spirit. *John* xvi. 13—15. *Eph.* vi. 10. 18.

Ver. 11. *Quicken me,*] Revive and restore me. This prayer is in the spirit of prophecy: that is, intended to declare, that David should certainly be delivered, and his enemies be destroyed.

Afflictions serve to remind us how weak and sinful we are: they bring health and strength to the soul; inasmuch as they lead us to confess, with greater earnestness and sincerity, our own helplessness and our total dependence upon God's grace and mercy, for acceptance and for blessing: to confess that in ourselves, and in our best actions, we are sinners: and that we can never, by our own obedience, be justified at the bar of our Judge: and this consideration will keep us as humble penitents, pleading guilty, crying for mercy, living by faith; and perceiving more and more the value and efficacy of the merits of Christ, for our justification in the sight of an offended God. We have broken the holy law of God, by thought, word, and deed, times without number: no one ever kept it perfectly, but the Lord Jesus Christ, who was both God and man, and thus, "without sin;" and thus fit to be made a sin-offering and a ransom for the offences of a guilty world. Through the merits of this one great sacrifice, David and all the people of old were accepted and saved; they believed on Christ, as on "him that *should* come." Through this Sacrifice alone can mankind be saved, to the end of time; we look upon "him that *is* come," and believe in His name: and for those who refuse or deny Him, there is nothing but "death and destruction;" "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment." *Heb.* x. 26, 27. Yet let us ever bear in mind, that though we cannot be saved by works, we cannot be saved without them; for without them our faith cannot be lively nor sincere; it would be a barren faith, that is, no saving faith at all. *James* ii. 26. We cannot be justified for our righteousness, but we shall be rewarded according to it, as the fruit of faith. *Luke* xix. 12—19. 2 *Cor.* ix. 6. *Rev.* xiv. 13; xx. 12, 13. Let us then at all times flee to the Lord; not only to hide us from every enemy, but also to make us "fruitful in every good work,"

Col. i. 10; imploring His "good Spirit" to guide us in the strait way of holiness to the land of perfect righteousness and everlasting peace.

QUESTIONS.

What do you mean by penitential Psalms?—On what day does the Church use them (See *Psalm* vi.)?—Why does David pray God not to enter into judgment with him?—What is "justified?"—Through whom are we justified?—What do we read in the New Testament on this subject?—My spirit vexed?—My heart desolate?—I muse?—Waxeth faint?—What does he beseech God's loving Spirit to do?—What would be the consequence of God's mercy to him?

THE THIRTIETH DAY.

Morning Prayer.

PSALM CXLIV.

David blesses God for having placed him on the throne of Israel, and prays for victory over his remaining enemies; and thus for peace and prosperity. See 2 Sam. v.

1 Blessed be the Lord my strength : who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight;

2 My hope and my fortress, my castle and deliverer, my defender in whom I trust : who subdueth my people that is under me.

3 Lord, what is man, that thou hast such respect unto him ? or the son of man, that thou so regardest him?

4 Man is like a thing of nought : his time passeth away like a shadow.

5 Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down : touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

6 Cast forth thy lightning, and tear them : shoot out thine arrows, and consume them.

7 Send down thine hand from above : deliver me, and take me out of the great waters, from the hand of strange children;

8 Whose mouth talketh of vanity : and their right hand is a right hand of wickedness.

9 I will sing a new song unto thee, O God : and sing praises unto thee upon a ten-stringed lute.

10 Thou hast given victory unto kings : and hast delivered David thy servant from the peril of the sword.

11 Save me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children : whose mouth talketh

of vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity.

12 That our sons may grow up as the young plants : and that our daughters may be as the polished corners of the temple.

13 That our garners may be full and plenteous with all manner of store : that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets.

14 That our oxen may be strong to labour, that there be no decay : no leading into captivity, and no complaining in our streets.

15 Happy are the people that are in such a case : yea, blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God.

Ver. 1. *my hands to war,*] Against His enemies and mine.

Ver. 2. *fortress,*] A place of strength. *Psalm* xviii. 1. —*who subdueth*] Who has brought all Israel into subjection to me.

Ver. 3. *what is man,*] And what am I that I should have been so favoured and honoured? See *Psalm* viii. 4.

Ver. 4. *of nought:*] *Psalm* xxxix. 6.—*like a shadow.*] *Psalm* cii. 11 ; cix. 22.

Ver. 5. 7.] See on *Psalm* xviii. 9—17.—*tear them :*] Tear mine enemies, shatter them to pieces.—*strange children ;*] The heathens, who were strangers to God and His holy worship, ver. 11.

Ver. 8. *their right hand, &c.*] It may mean, either that their deeds were as wicked as their words were false; or rather that their very oaths were not to be trusted. The ancient form of swearing an oath seems to have been by holding up the right hand. See *Gen.* xiv. 22, 23. *Deut.* xxxii. 40. *Isaiah* xliv. 20; and see ver. 11.

Ver. 9. *a new song*] For the new mercies which Thou hast vouchsafed to me in my deliverance and exaltation to the throne.

Ver. 10. *unto kings :*] It is Thou alone who givest victory unto kings, and Thou hast given it to me.—*peril of the sword.*] The dangers of war.

Ver. 12. *the polished corners*] The corners of a building are often more ornamented with carved work and polished pillars, and the best of the material is chosen for the corner stone. The meaning is, that our daughters may be fair and excellent: in a time of peace they would be better trained and educated.

Ver. 13. *our garners*] Our granaries or barns; our store-houses.—*in our streets.*] Rather, in our "sheep-walks" in the field.

Ver. 14. *no leading into captivity,*] No robberies in the fold; no driving away of our cattle as prisoners by the fraud or violence of an enemy.

War is one of the most dreadful of all evils; bringing woes without number upon the land in which it is carried on, and cutting off many thousands who are ill prepared for death and eternity. But it may be sometimes necessary; and when it is waged, God has the victory in His own hands: "The battle is the Lord's." 1 *Sam.* xvii. 47. 2 *Chron.* xx. 15. How thankful should those people be, to whom the Almighty Ruler gives the blessings of peace! how diligently should they employ all the opportunities afforded them, in the service of their God and in the improvement of one another! How thankfully should they attend upon the house of the Lord and all His ordinances, when they have no enemy to disturb them! How devoutly should they study their Bibles in peace! How earnestly should they pray and labour, that the heavenly "kingdom may come" more and more, and be extended to every corner of the land, and be set up in every family and every heart! Thus would the youth of our country be excellent and honourable; and they would prove, in the hand of God, a safeguard and an ornament and a blessing; "so that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." *Isaiah* lxi. 3. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." *Prov.* xiv. 34.

QUESTIONS.

What is the subject of this Psalm?—What was the Lord to David?—What is man like?—Explain ver. 5—7.—Their right hand, &c.?—A new song—for what?—Unto kings—to whom did he mean?—Strange children?—To what are their sons compared?—To what the daughters?—Polished corners?—Garners?—Sheep in our streets?—No leading into captivity?—Repeat the last verse.

PSALM CXLV.

This is throughout a Psalm of honour and thanksgiving for the power and goodness of God, as shown in mercies both

temporal and spiritual; and since it may fitly be applied to the "great and marvellous acts" of the Holy Spirit, and to the blessings bestowed by Him, the Psalm is used on Whit-Sunday.

1 I will magnify thee, O God my King : and I will praise thy Name for ever and ever.

2 Every day will I give thanks unto thee : and praise thy Name for ever and ever.

3 Great is the Lord, and marvellous, worthy to be praised : there is no end of his greatness.

4 One generation shall praise thy works unto another : and declare thy power.

5 As for me, I will be talking of thy worship : thy glory, thy praise, and wondrous works ;

6 So that men shall speak of the might of thy marvellous acts : and I will also tell of thy greatness.

7 The memorial of thine abundant kindness shall be showed : and men shall sing of thy righteousness.

8 The Lord is gracious, and merciful : long-suffering, and of great goodness.

9 The Lord is loving unto every man : and his mercy is over all his works.

10 All thy works praise thee, O Lord : and thy saints give thanks unto thee.

11 They show the glory of thy kingdom : and talk of thy power ;

12 That thy power, thy glory, and mightiness of thy kingdom : might be known unto men.

13 Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom : and thy dominion endureth throughout all ages.

14 The Lord upholdeth all such as fall : and lifteth up all those that are down.

15 The eyes of all wait upon thee, O Lord : and thou givest them their meat in due season.

16 Thou openest thine hand : and fillest all things living with plenteousness.

17 The Lord is righteous in all his ways : and holy in all his works.

18 The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him : yea, all such as call upon him faithfully.

19 He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him : he also will hear their cry, and will help them.

20 The Lord preserveth all them that love him : but scatteseth abroad all the ungodly.

21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord : and let all flesh give thanks unto his holy Name for ever and ever.

Ver. 1. *my King :*] David probably alludes to Jehovah Jesus, to his King Messiah. *Psalm* xcvi. 10. *John* i. 49.

Ver. 2. *Every day*] The mercies of God are never absent from the mind of any true believer and servant, even for a single day.

Ver. 5. *thy worship:*] Thy honour and majesty. *Psalm* iii. 3.

Ver. 6. *thy marvellous acts:*] Especially in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt; this most wonderful act of mercy and power seems to have been always uppermost in David's mind: and so ought our redemption from the bondage of sin, by the death and resurrection of Christ, to be always uppermost in *our* minds, when we are singing or declaring the goodness of our God.

Ver. 7. *The memorial*] *Psalm* cxxxv. 13.

Ver. 8. *is gracious, &c.*] *Exod.* xxxiv. 6, 7. *Joel* ii. 13.

Ver. 10. *All thy works praise thee,*] Answering Thy purpose and fulfilling Thy will.—*thy saints*] Thy holy people.

Ver. 11—13. *thy kingdom:*] This being "an everlasting kingdom," clearly looks forward to the kingdom of God, under the Gospel dispensation, ver. 1.

Ver. 15, 16.] Here is a most beautiful description of the complete provision made by Jehovah for the supply of all His creatures.

Ver. 17. *in all his works.*] In all His dealings and doings.

Ver. 18. *is nigh*] *Psalm* xxxiv. 18; lxxxv. 9.

Ver. 19. *that fear him:*] That reverence and serve Him. *Psalm* cxi. 10.

Ver. 20. *scattereth abroad*] Defeateth and destroyeth.

Ver. 21. *let all flesh*] This is another intimation of the call of mankind to the praise of God by the Gospel.

As the greatness and love of God our Saviour have no bounds, so His praises should have no end; they should be continually sung by one believer after another, and by one generation after another: so that the glory of the Lord may be set forth and celebrated "in earth as it is in heaven." All the works of God in their several ways make a due return for the mercy vouchsafed to them, and "declare his glory;" and shall man be silent? man, who is not only the object of God's merciful pro-

vidence, but also of His divine grace; to whom, in the midst of all his transgressions, the Lord has been "long-suffering and of great goodness;" whom He has redeemed from the power of the enemy, and blessed with the means of life and salvation. And as "the eyes of all wait upon the Lord, and he giveth them their meat in due season," so upon Him, as the Saviour of men, as the King and Father and Shepherd of His Church, do believers wait with earnest expectation, for the food of eternal life: nor will they ever so look in vain: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." *Matt.* vii. 7; v. 6. The Lord moreover not only feedeth, but "preserveth all them that love him;" by His grace He now preserves them in the midst of dangers and temptations, and He will conduct them safely to their journey's end. Then will His power be manifested in their complete and everlasting salvation, and in the destruction of every enemy. O then, let all who believe in Him, let all who have been baptized in His name, let all who hope to be saved by Him, begin upon earth the song which the saints will sing for ever in heaven, "Great is the Lord and marvellous, worthy to be praised: there is no end of his greatness."

QUESTIONS.

My King—to whom may this allude?—Of Thy worship?—The memorial?—What is the Lord unto every man?—And His mercy is—what?—Upon whom do the eyes of all wait?—What does the Lord give them?—When He openeth His hand—what then?—The Lord is nigh—to whom?—Whom does the Lord preserve?—What does He do to the ungodly?

PSALM CXLVI.

This Psalm of praise, whether composed by David or not, is addressed, in the spirit of prophecy, to the Messiah, the Lord Jesus, who was "the God of Israel" and "the King of Sion."

1 Praise the Lord, O my soul; while I live will I praise the Lord: yea, as long as I have any being, I will sing praises unto my God.

2 O put not your trust in princes, nor in any child of man: for there is no help in them.

3 For when the breath of man goeth forth he shall turn again to his earth: and then all his thoughts perish.

4 Blessed is he that hath the

God of Jacob for his help : and whose hope is in the Lord his God :

5 Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that therein is : who keepeth his promise for ever;

6 Who helpeth them to right that suffer wrong : who feedeth the hungry.

7 The Lord looseth men out of prison : the Lord giveth sight to the blind.

8 The Lord helpeth them that are fallen : the Lord careth for the righteous.

9 The Lord careth for the strangers; he defendeth the fatherless and widow : as for the way of the ungodly, he turneth it upside down.

10 The Lord thy God, O Sion, shall be king for evermore : and throughout all generations.

Ver. 3. *For when the breath, &c.*] This is given as the reason why we should not trust in any man, because he is mortal; he may die any day: and all his thoughts and all his promises of good to us may perish in a moment.

Ver. 7—9.] It is commonly agreed, even among the Jews, that these verses are spoken of the Messiah, who is often foretold as opening the eyes of the blind, *Isa.* xxix. 18; xxxv. 5; xlii. 18; and He performed this miracle on many occasions. *Matt.* xi. 4, 5. *John* ix. 1—7. 32—38. But if one portion of this Psalm belongs to the Messiah, it all belongs to Him, for there is no change in the person addressed: and if we examine the various expressions, we shall see how truly they describe Him: for instance, "Who made heaven and earth," *John* i. 3; "who feedeth the hungry," *Matt.* xiv. 15—21; xv. 32—38; v. 6. *John* vi. 35—51: "looseth man out of prison," *Isa.* lxi. 1. *Luke* iv. 18; "careth for the strangers," *John* x. 16: indeed every word applies exactly.

Ver. 9. *turneth it upside down.*] God turneth aside the way of the wicked, so as to prevent them from going as they had intended, from executing their evil purposes; He turns them into the way of ruin.

From the Lord Jesus, the "God of Jacob," the "King of kings and Lord of lords," Sion looks for deliverance; and by Him all her true children expect to be blessed and exalted. He "keepeth his promise for ever"—both able and willing to perform it; and never disappoints those who rely upon Him. The faithful servant of his master is by that master sure to be

approved and rewarded. Earthly princes, even if they have the will, often want the power, to help and protect their friends; and whatever they may do, there is no depending upon them: when "God taketh away their breath, they die, and are turned again to their dust," *Psalm* civ. 29. Hear then the advice of the prophet: "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils! for wherein is he to be accounted of? Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." *Isaiah* ii. 22; xxvi. 4. He still feedeth His people with "all things that be needful both for their souls and bodies;" He loseeth men from the prison and the chains of sin; and openeth the eyes of those who were born blind, and showeth them the way of salvation: He still "careth for the righteous, and defendeth the fatherless and widow." Happy the people of such a God! happy the subjects of such a King! "Praise the Lord, O my soul," as long as thou remainest in thy earthly tabernacle; that so, when the Lord calleth thee away, thou mayest praise Him for the call; praise Him in thy departure: and be taken to His courts of everlasting praise and joy.

QUESTIONS.

In what should we not put our trust?—And why?—Who is blessed?—What did He make?—Show how the several expressions in ver. 5—9, properly apply to the Messiah.—And how they agree with the prophet Isaiah.—What should the consideration of God's mercy lead us to do?

Evening Prayer.

PSALM CXLVII.

This song of thanksgiving was probably composed on the return of Israel from their captivity in Babylon, when Jerusalem and the Temple were rebuilt, ver. 2. Nehem. i. ii. *But it may be applied to blessings vouchsafed to the Church in any and every age.*

1 O praise the Lord, for it is a good thing to sing praises unto our God: yea, a joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful.

2 The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: and gather together the outcasts of Israel.

3 He healeth those that are broken in heart: and giveth medicine to heal their sickness.

4 He telleth the number of

the stars : and calleth them all by their names.

5 Great is our Lord, and great is his power : yea, and his wisdom is infinite.

6 The Lord setteth up the meek : and bringeth the ungodly down to the ground.

7 O sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving : sing praises upon the harp unto our God ;

8 Who covereth the heaven with clouds, and prepareth rain for the earth : and maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains, and herb for the use of men ;

9 Who giveth fodder unto the cattle : and feedeth the young ravens that call upon him.

10 He hath no pleasure in the strength of an horse : neither delighteth he in any man's legs.

11 But the Lord's delight is in them that fear him : and put their trust in his mercy.

12 Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem : praise Thy God, O Sion.

13 For He hath made fast the bars of thy gates : and hath blessed thy children within thee.

14 He maketh peace in thy borders : and filleth thee with the flour of wheat.

15 He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth : and his word runneth very swiftly.

16 He giveth snow like wool : and scattereth the hoar frost like ashes.

17 He casteth forth his ice like morsels : who is able to abide his frost ?

18 He sendeth out his word and melteth them : he bloweth with his wind, and the waters flow.

19 He sheweth his word unto Jacob : his statutes and ordinances unto Israel.

20 He hath not dealt so with any nation : neither have the heathen knowledge of his laws.

Ver. 2. *and gather, &c.*] Thus did Christ "gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad," *John* xi. 52 ; and thus will He gather them together in the latter day. *Matt.* xxiv. 31.

Ver. 3. *broken in heart :*] *Isa.* xlii. 3 ; lxi. 1. *Luke* iv. 18. *Matt.* xii. 20.

Ver. 4. *the number of the stars :*] He who numbereth and nameth the stars, hath numbered and called His people. *John* x. 27.

Ver. 5. *infinite.*] Without bounds, not to be measured or understood.

Ver. 6. *setteth up the meek :*] 1 *Sam.* ii. 8. *Matt.* v. 5.

Ver. 8. *upon the mountains,*] Upon the high hills. The Lord is the giver both of earthly and spiritual blessings,

and the one is often put as an emblem of the other. See on *Psalm* lxv. 9—14.

Ver. 9. *the young ravens*] The fowls of the air. *Luke* xii. 24. *Matt.* vi. 26.

Ver. 10. *He hath no pleasure, &c.*] He favoureth not those who depend on any earthly means. "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." *Eccles.* ix. 11.

Ver. 13. *made fast the bars, &c.*] He defendeth and preserveth thee; and hath enabled thee to raise thy walls and gates again. *Nehem.* iv. 15—17.

Ver. 14. *the flour of wheat.*] *Psalm* lxv. 14.

Ver. 15. *very swiftly.*] His word is instantly obeyed; in the world of creation, as in the world of grace, He is almighty.

Ver. 16. *like wool:*] Covering the earth like a fleece of wool, and keeping it warm during the frost.

Ver. 17. *like morsels:*] He showereth down His hail-stones like pieces of ice.

Ver. 18. *melteth them:*] Melteth the snow, and frost, and ice, at His word, at His good pleasure.—*bloweth, &c.*] A change of wind (from hard to soft, from cold to warm) makes the frost disappear. And just as severe weather is followed by mild, at God's bidding; so at His bidding, conflicts and troubles pass away, and peace and joy return. At His word, Jerusalem had been sore afflicted for her sins; and at His word, she was recovering her prosperity.

All things are created for the honour and glory of God (*Prov.* xvi. 4. *Eph.* i. 9—12); and to sing His praises, forms one of the most suitable returns for His benefits, of which we are capable. Nothing is too great, nothing too small, for the power and mercy of God: by Him the stars were all made, and by Him they are all kept in their places; "Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (*Rev.* iv. 11); that is, for God's pleasure they are now in being, and for His pleasure they were at first made. *Gen.* i. 16—18. But yet He condescends to take care of the lowest and meanest of His creatures; and especially does He delight to dwell with the contrite and broken-hearted sinner, who has debased himself in the deepest repentance, and sits mourning in sackcloth and ashes, unnoticed and unknown by the vain and scornful world. *Isaiah*

lvii. 15. When His Church, or any member of His Church, looks to Him for help, He will be sure to come for deliverance and for blessing: whilst He feeds the young ravens who cry unto him," He gives a pledge that He will not leave His people, who pray to Him, in want of what is needful. All things are in His hand: He who bids the clouds of heaven to disperse, and the sun to shine, can remove the cloud of sorrow from every soul, and cheer it with the light and comfort of His grace; He who bids the south wind blow, and melts the icy fetters in which the earth is bound, can send His Holy Spirit to breathe upon the hardest heart, to loosen the chains of sin, and melt it into the love of His mercy and the reverence of His name. O let us praise Him; let us live for His praise: and soon the wintry storms of life shall all be past, and we shall be taken to enjoy an eternal spring, in the garden of the second Eden, in the happy paradise above.

QUESTIONS.

What is the subject of this Psalm?—The outcasts of Israel—who were they?—Whom does God heal?—Infinite?—Feedeth the young ravens?—In what doth the Lord not delight?—In whom does He delight?—Made fast the bars, &c.?—His word runneth very swiftly?—Snow like wool?—Ice like morsels?—What may we gather from the Lord's power to change the face of nature?

PSALM CXLVIII.

All the creatures in the world are called upon to unite in one grand chorus of praise and thanksgiving.

1 O praise the Lord of heaven: praise him in the height.
2 Praise him, all ye angels of his: praise him, all his host.
3 Praise him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars and light.
4 Praise him, all ye heavens: and ye waters that are above the heavens.
5 Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he spake the word, and they were made; he commanded, and they were created.
6 He hath made them fast for ever and ever: he hath given them a law which shall not be broken.
7 Praise the Lord upon earth: ye dragons, and all deeps;
8 Fire and hail, snow and vapours: wind and storm, fulfilling his word;
9 Mountains and all hills: fruitful trees and all cedars;

10 Beasts and all cattle : worms and feathered fowls ;
11 Kings of the earth and all people : princes and all judges of the world ;
12 Young men and maidens, old men and children, praise the Name of the Lord : for his Name only is excellent, and his praise above heaven and earth.
13 He shall exalt the horn of his people ; all his saints shall praise him : even the children of Israel, even the people that serveth him.

Ver. 1. *in the height.*] In the highest heavens.

Ver. 3—5.] See on *Psalm* xix. 1—3.

Ver. 4. *all ye heavens :*] Whatever is in that portion of the heavens which surrounds the earth—in the firmament or sky. *Gen.* i. 6—14.

Ver. 6. *a law*] Rules and laws of their nature and their motions.

Ver. 7. *upon earth :*] All ye creatures upon earth, whether with or without life.—*ye dragons,*] Ye great animals, which inhabit the sea.

Ver. 8. *fulfilling his word :*] Messengers to execute His righteous purposes, whether of mercy or of judgment ; obedient to His command.

Ver. 10. *worms*] All creeping things.

Ver. 11. *Kings, &c.*] Having called upon all creatures that are without reason, the Psalmist now proceeds to exhort man, upon whom his Maker has bestowed this noble gift, which ought to be used in the service of Him who gave it.

Ver. 13. *the horn*] *Psalm* xviii. 1.—*his people—his saints—the children of Israel,*] As men above all other creatures, so above other men must the people of God praise Him. They who have been admitted into covenant with Him ; who know His word and His will ; who are blessed with the light of salvation, and taught to "worship him in spirit and in truth ;" they must be most ready and sincere in His praise.

When St. John saw in a vision the King of Glory seated on His throne, he tells us that he heard all the angels which stood around the throne, with the elders, and every creature in heaven, earth, and sea, lifting up their voices, and singing together a hymn of thanksgiving in honour of Him : and this was their song : "Blessing and honour, and glory and power, be unto him

that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." *Rev.* v. 13. Such a band and chorus we find here summoned by the inspired Psalmist, in praise of the same divine Person, by whom "were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth," and by whom "all things consist." *Col.* i. 16, 17. In heaven the song is to begin and the strain to be set, and it is to be taken up and echoed back by the creatures of this world, which have all their several parts allotted to them, in the great work of glorifying their Creator. But man, above all, as he has a power above all; a mind, a reason, a "living soul," (*Gen.* ii. 7,) and still more redeemed man, "the member of Christ, the child of God," the "inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." O what tongue can tell the glory and the mercy of our Creator and Saviour? But let us do what we may; "high and low, rich and poor, one with another:" children, as they are entering upon life, with all their freshness; youth, as they are rising, with all their vigour; manhood, in its ripeness and strength; and old age as it is declining, with a fuller experience of mercies. And thus, having carried the song through our "mortal life," we shall renew it where it began, in the courts of heaven, in the "life immortal."

QUESTIONS.

Describe the purpose of this Psalm?—In the height?—Hath given them a law?—Ye dragons?—Fulfilling His word?—Worms?—Who are most bound to praise God?—Where do we find a similar account of the creation joining in praise?—What are the words of the heavenly song?

PSALM CXLIX.

A celebration of some victory which foreshows complete triumph of Israel over the heathen, and of the kingdom of God over the kingdom of Satan.

1 O sing unto the Lord a new song: let the congregation of saints praise him.

2 Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: and let the children of Sion be joyful in their King.

3 Let them praise his Name in the dance: and let them sing praises unto him with tabret and harp.

4 For the Lord hath pleasure in his people: and helpeth the meek-hearted.

5 Let the saints be joyful with glory: let them rejoice in their beds.

6 Let the praises of God be in their mouth: and a two-edged sword in their hands;

7 To be avenged of the heathen: and to rebuke the people;

8 To bind their kings in chains : and their nobles with links of iron.

9 That they may be avenged of them, as it is written : such honour have all his saints.

Ver. 1. *a new song :*] For a new victory; every fresh token of mercy demands a new strain of thanksgiving.

Ver. 2. *that made him :*] See on *Psalm* c. 2.

Ver. 3. *in the dance :*] See *Psalm* cl. 4. Thus Miriam sung a song of triumph for the victory at the Red Sea. *Exod.* xv. 20.

Ver. 4. *the meek-hearted.*] *Psalm* cxlvii. 6.

Ver. 5. *in their beds.*] When they go to rest; let them reflect upon the wonders which the Lord hath wrought for them, and praise His name.

Ver. 6. *a two-edged sword*] To obtain other victories, in the name and for the cause of Jehovah.

Ver. 8. *their kings—their nobles*] The heathen princes and commanders.

Ver. 9. *as it is written :*] *Deut.* vii. 24; xxxii. 41—43. This foretels the final destruction of all the nations under the Gospel, which shall set themselves up against the Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. *Isa.* xiv. 22, 23. *Rev.* xvii. 14.—*such honour*] The honour of being engaged in the cause of the Lord, and gaining the victory as instruments in His almighty hand.

The names in this Psalm of "saints, Israel, and children of Sion," now belong to Christians; we are the saints or "holy ones" of God; we are what Israel was of old, God's "peculiar people;" we are children of the heavenly Sion; all this we are by profession: let us take care to show and approve ourselves such, in deed and in truth. And then we may sing this holy song, as the Psalmist in spirit has enjoined us to do: we may sing it "new," in its spiritual sense, as new men, celebrating new victories, new and greater mercies, the salvation of the soul, eternal redemption by Christ Jesus. We rejoice in Him, who hath "made," or "created us in righteousness and true holiness." *Eph.* iv. 24. We are "joyful in our King," who hath Himself overcome, and will enable us to go forth "conquering and to conquer." Thus it was declared of our triumphant King Messiah: "Behold, the LORD GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." *Isa.* xl. 10, 11; lxii. 10—12. He

has come, He has conquered; let us put on his armour, and contend manfully against every enemy—the world, the flesh, and the devil; let us take the shield of faith, and the breastplate of righteousness, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," (*Eph.* vi. 13—17,) which is indeed "sharper than any two-edged sword." *Heb.* iv. 12. Victory is certain, if we "be not weary nor faint in our minds." Let us hear, let us write in our hearts, the encouraging words of the Captain of our salvation: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." *John* xvi. 33. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." *Rev.* iii. 21.

QUESTIONS.

A new song?—In Him that made him?—The meek-hearted?—Rejoice in their beds?—What other victories are foretold in this Psalm?—By what names, used of old, are Christians now described?

PSALM CL.

An exhortation to all people, to praise God for all His excellences, by all the means in their power.

1 O praise God in his holiness: praise him in the firmament of his power.
2 Praise him in his noble acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness.
3 Praise him in the sound of the trumpet: praise him upon the lute and harp.
4 Praise him in the cymbals and dances: praise him upon the strings and pipe.
5 Praise him upon the well-tuned cymbals: praise him upon the loud cymbals.
6 Let every thing that hath breath: praise the Lord.

Ver. 1. *in his holiness:*] Rather, "on account of his holiness;" and on account of the firmament of heaven, which setteth forth His power and glory. *Psalm* xix. 1.

Ver. 2. *in his noble acts:*] For His "tokens and wonders" of mercy and justice, of wisdom and power, of faithfulness and truth, ever shown to Israel. *Psalm* cxxxv. cxxxvi.

Ver. 3. *in the sound*] With the sound. We cannot decide at the present day upon the nature and use of the various musical instruments mentioned in this Psalm. It

seems to mean, that a great chorus should be formed of all the instruments together.

Ver. 6. *every thing that hath breath:*] Every man breathing; if he breathes, let him praise the God who gives him breath. *Gen.* ii. 7. In the Hebrew (and in the *Bible Version*) each of these three last Psalms begins and ends with "Hallelujah," that is, "praise ye Jehovah" (see on *Psalm* lxviii. 4); and thus in this last and 150th Psalm the word "praise" would occur *thirteen* times in six verses. May we learn a lesson from so suitable a conclusion to this holy book!

Glory be to THE FATHER, and to THE SON, and to THE HOLY GHOST; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

THE END.

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